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ABSTRACT

This report provides outcomes for 1995-96 for Monroe Community College's Writing-Across-the-Curriculum (WAC) program, an effort designed to help students learn to write in all disciplines through writing centers staffed by student writing fellows. Following introductory remarks, the report provides discussions of the following topics: the future of WAC at the college; major achievements for the year; peer tutors (a review of the Writing Fellow Program); statistical outcomes by quarter; procedures for scheduling tutors; and outcomes from program evaluations completed by 408 students, tutors, and college faculty. Sample newsletters, bulletins, and evaluation report forms are appended. Highlights of the report include the following: (1) in 1995-96, 1,917 conferences were held, compared to 1,788 in 1994-95; (2) the most common assignment on campus was the 500-word theme paper, followed by the research paper, and the book or article review; (3) the most common form of writing was expository, followed by persuasive; (4) 1,413 of the students served were from the Humanities/Social Science Department, while 192 were from Business and 161 were from Industrial Technology; (5) in evaluations, 96% of student respondents indicated that they found it convenient to use the Writing Center, while 94% said that tutors identified problems in their writing of which they were unaware; and (6) 99% of the students thought that they would use the Writing Center again. Comments from students, faculty, and WAC staff are included. (HAA)

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Monroe County Community College

Writing Across the Curriculum Annual Report 1995-1996

Compiled and Written
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Writing Across the Curriculum Annual Report 1995-1996
Written by Timothy J. Dillon, Writing Across the Curriculum Program Coordinator
June, 1994

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Foreground: Writing Fellow Lisa Pierce (right) and Tera Holland talk about writing strategies.
Background: Writing Fellow George Rhodes discusses Heather Merriman's paper with her.

I. Introductory Remarks: 1995-96 Annual Report

Writing Across the Curriculum at Monroe County Community College

The Importance of Writing Instruction

"Writing Instruction will continue to occupy a central place in the school and college classroom, if only because more writing is required of skilled workers than ever before" (Berlin 219-20). If this were the only reason for writing instruction, and it is not, it would certainly be enough to ensure that the teaching of writing maintain its place in any college curriculum. It remains true in an "information age," that the contiguous disciplines of writing and reading have withstood all other challengers at the forefront of communications. Beyond that, there is another reason, arguably even more important than employment requirements, for writing to endure as a cornerstone of education: writing is linked to learning. At Monroe County Community College, the academic community has rallied behind our Writing Across the Curriculum program in recognition of this simple, but sometimes ignored, fact.

"Writing Instruction will continue to occupy a central place in the school and college classroom, if only because more writing is required of skilled workers than ever before"

In recent years, researchers have gone beyond the obvious link between writing and learning to explore the specifics of the writing-learning relationship. For example, research conducted by Judith Langer and Arthur Applebee draws four general conclusions about the continued role of writing in learning. "First, the more that content is manipulated, the more likely it is to be remembered and understood" (130). This conclusion suggests that writing almost always increases learning over a simple reading of a text. "Second, the effects of writing tasks are greatest for the particular information focused upon during the writing," suggesting that writing is very content specific and should be contiguous to the discipline in which the writing is produced (130). "Third, writing tasks differ in the breadth of information drawn upon and in the depth of processing of that information that they invoke," suggesting the outcome of learning is dependent on the depth and breadth of the writing task (130). "Fourth, if content is familiar and relationships are well understood, writing may have no major effect at all," suggesting that writing has little effect on information already understood by the student (131). Overall, these conclusions suggest a strong link between writing and learning for any body of knowledge not already comprehended by the student.

Langer and Applebee continue, "there is clear evidence that activities involving writing (*any* of the many sorts of writing we studied) lead to better learning than activities involving reading and studying only. Writing assists learning" (135).

Writing Instruction at MCCC: Evaluation of Purpose, Methodology, and Service

Over the last nine years, our WAC program has remained committed to assisting students as they engage in the difficult task of learning through writing. Yet, as with all programs we can never assume that what has worked in the past will necessarily work in the future. For this reason, we are always evaluating our program from inside and out, to determine if our approach to WAC and the Writing Center is consistent with our purpose, if the methodology we employ is consistent with our desired outcome, and if our service to students is consistent with the goals of the college. In each of these cases, I believe we are on target.

However, I would like to examine these three areas and reaffirm our purpose, methodology, and philosophy of student services.

The purpose of our WAC program, as outlined in our MCCC Writing Fellow Handbook, is to "help all students at MCCC become better writers by providing an opportunity for close and regular contact with supportive, yet critical audience," and "to help all MCCC faculty become better teachers by providing a valuable service . . ." (Holladay). Inherent in these two specific purposes are broader purposes to which our WAC program aspires. Our program contributes to four critical components of student learning: critical thinking, self-reflection, active learning, and the sense of campus community.

Critical thinking is important in all academic areas; it is in fact one of the designated outcomes in the current MCCC self-evaluation process. How does WAC contribute to critical thinking? As Margot Soven indicates in her book Write to Learn: A Guide to Writing Across the Curriculum, "Writing seems to facilitate thinking about a subject. The act of writing enables the writer to discern new relationships and make new connections" (2). This means that the act of writing engages the writer in several sophisticated steps of critical thinking: application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation; and it is through these steps that students are able to personalize knowledge and create meaning. In recognition of this, WAC at MCCC encourages all faculty to use a variety of writing models that contribute to students' abilities to think critically and understand the relationships among a variety of ideas in a variety of disciplines. From the positive comments from faculty who use WAC, we can conclude that the program plays an important role in this process. Self-reflection is another benefit of our WAC program. Self-reflection through writing produces two outcomes: evaluation of knowledge and evaluation of process. In the first, the student is able to catalogue knowledge--that is, list what he or she already knows about a subject so as to determine in what direction he or she must go to gain more knowledge. A few assignments that facilitate this type of self-reflection are free writing, loop writing, and brainstorming. In the second, the student is able to reflect on the process of writing: schedules, time management, success and failures, and strategies. Types of assignments that work well here are journals, learning logs, and lecture notes. Many of the above writing models are used extensively by MCCC faculty, and these assignments have involved students in a level of comprehension of subject matter that would otherwise be more difficult to produce. Self-reflection also allows students to envision themselves as active learners who are responsible for their own successes.

"Writing is an active learning process, and active learning seems to be more effective than passive reception" (Soven 1). An active learner becomes part of the process of learning. Rather than the receptacle to be filled, the active learner is the explorer who discovers and the pioneer who breaks new ground. Active learners must also use several strategies that reinforce learning: deciding on a purpose to the work, selecting an audience, organizing data, structuring an assignment, and working toward a mastery of content (Soven 8-9). Self-reflection facilitates active learning, and our WAC program creates a learning environment that encourages and supports active learning.

Last, is the influence WAC can have on creating a sense of "campus community." Numerous studies have established that many community college students feel disenfranchised from the campus community. As community college students, they have part-time or full-time jobs, families, and other responsibilities that keep them from participating in campus activities and from using college facilities and programs. Because our WAC program encourages and requires participation by students in writing intensive courses, they are made aware that college services exist beyond the classroom. In this report, under the student evaluation section, you will read comments from students who make it clear that they would not have used the

Writing Center service if it had not been required; yet, they are very thankful they did. The effect of this is that students are likely to explore other campus services because of their positive experiences with the Writing Center.

The second variable in assessment is methodology--how we go about implementing our WAC program. In examining the literature on Writing Centers and WAC, and from attending conferences and corresponding with WAC directors across Michigan colleges, it is clear that there are numerous plans of implementation. Some schools use faculty as tutors while others use students, some schools require student attendance in a writing center while others make it voluntary, and some schools use their writing center and WAC for remediation while others appeal to all ranges of abilities. At MCCC we use the Brown University Model--Writing Fellows are assigned to courses across the curriculum. This method has worked well for our students and in comparison to many other universities, colleges, and community colleges, our per capita conferencing exceeds most. We completed over 1900 conferences in the academic year, from a student population of approximately 3500 students. Compared to other institutions, that number is exceptional. This fact, in addition to the anecdotal information compiled from students and faculty, suggests that our methodology is sound and productive. We must not forget, however, that the focus of our service is always the student.

Our primary clients are students and our program philosophy encourages all students, of all levels of writing ability, to use our services. We are not a remediation mill, nor do we exist for students who do not belong in college--in fact, we exist for students who do belong in college, and the quality of our program lies in this philosophy. Some of the services we provide are: creating a non-threatening environment for students who want to discuss writing problems, allowing students to take control of their thinking and writing by using writing tutors to translate the language of teaching and academics into student language, and demonstrating strategies for completing successful writing assignments from inception to finished product. These services are important to the quality of learning in our college.

While the most important clients for WAC services are students, we also provide important services to faculty. Because we use a Writing Fellow program that "requires" students to see a tutor, there is a reward for faculty as well. For example, while faculty cannot generally meet with all of their students individually, writing tutors can. Tutors are able to meet with and help each student with a variety of problems, and these tutors are available most hours of the day. The benefits of these services are that students are less frustrated with the progress of their work, and work more efficiently toward their goal--the finished assignment. In addition, tutors can forestall serious writing problems in developing ideas, following the assignment, organizing information, and developing content--all of which are part of the process of writing. Consequently, the papers students submit to faculty are often more developed, better organized, and more complete than they would have been without the help of the tutor. Faculty survey comments over the last several years strongly support the conclusion that faculty save time and effort because the papers they read are better organized, more thoroughly developed, and follow the assignment more closely.

As I look back over the year and examine the statistics and anecdotal information, I can confidently conclude that the purpose of WAC has remained consistent. I can also conclude that our methodology is reliable and that students are benefiting from our program. This does not mean, however, that our work is finished or that change will not occur. In fact, the latter is more likely. In the next section you will read about a few of the challenges and changes we anticipate over the next few years.

II. The Future of WAC at Monroe County Community College

Technology and Distance Tutoring

WAC programs across the country are becoming strongly linked to technology. As explained in the March newsletter in the appendix of this report, terms like MOO, OWL, WEB, and MUD are becoming part of the everyday vocabulary of college students. MCCC is in the process of introducing on-line technology to our faculty and students, and WAC must merge onto the information highway and join cyberspace education with all other programs.

Several of the writing fellows joined me in attending conferences on this subject, and we discovered that many colleges and universities have joined the cyber-conferencing crowd already. These colleges generally have Web-sites–computer talk for accessible information about program services, conference appointment schedules, grammar helpers, and writing tips and strategies–easily accessible to anyone with a computer and a modem. In addition, some schools have already set up E-Mail distance conferencing or they are using software that creates dialogue capabilities parallel to a written document that both parties, student and tutor, display on their computer screens. In other words, the tutor can conference the student from any distance.

The good news about all of this is that we can learn from the mistakes of others. Because this is new technology, colleges have been feeling their way and making their share of errors in judging the potential value of the technology and its realistic uses. We can, therefore, learn from the errors of others so as to not overemphasize the value of this technology in writing programs. In addition, workshops are popping up around the state that deal directly with setting up a cyber-space WAC program, and we have the advantage of attending these before we make decisions about the breadth and scope of distance conferencing at MCCC.

While we cannot be certain where all of this will take us, we do have several ideas. One very realistic goal is to be able to distance-conference students at Whitman and Jefferson Centers from Main Campus. When our on-line technology is in place, this procedure becomes a relatively simple and low budget program that only requires access to a few computers, E-Mail, and dialogue software. Another advantage is that any student with on-line capabilities can access the Writing Center from his or her home, increasing our potential for conferencing more students and expanding access to other tutoring services.

For example, one use for on-line technology is setting up our own Web-site. Once in place, students can access the site on their computers to download information about the writing process, the steps of a research project, writing strategies, or answers to simple questions about grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

The potential for this technology is expanding every day beyond the normal communication frontiers, and we want to be a part of the expansion. However, some changes may have to occur to keep up with the technology. I have discussed some of these possibilities with Dr. McCloskey. They include: building in lab time for 254 Advanced Composition students who must learn this technology quickly and efficiently, purchasing at least two computers for the LAL that would only be used for the Writing Center, allowing students at Whitman and Jefferson access to computers, and possibly more released time for the WAC Coordinator to set up the distance tutoring program. All of these issues will have to be worked out within the next year.

While it is prudent to accept on-line technology as a realistic tool for writing centers, it is just as prudent to remain focused on student services. I do not believe distance tutoring will replace one-to-one tutoring in a writing center, and at best on-line technology will remain an auxiliary program, albeit an important one.

III. The Year in Review

Goals and Objectives

In last year's annual report, I discussed a five point plan to re-establish the WAC program at MCCC. In review, the five points were: develop a writing fellow staff; revamp procedures; establish reliable data; re-establish communications with writing fellows, faculty, and staff; and develop workshops and means of educating faculty about our services. In the 1995-1996 school year, we have been realistically successful in every area.

Our writing fellow staff is experienced and competent and we will have over 35 students beginning the fall semester as Senior or Novice Writing Fellows. In addition, procedures within the program are stable and reliable. We have updated several forms used for our conference reporting system (see appendix), and procedures are clearly followed by everyone in the program. Statistical data is in its second year of collection, and we are beginning to see patterns in the type of students who use our services, in the effectiveness of our conferencing, and in the types of writing assigned by faculty. This is valuable information for the development of the WAC program. To re-establish communications we have continued to publish the Language For Learning newsletter, distributed to all faculty and staff, and we have begun a bi-weekly publication called the WAC Bulletin that is a communication link between the Writing Fellows and the WAC Coordinator (see appendix). These publications have helped to affirm procedures, keep the staff and tutors apprised of changes, reinforce our philosophy, and forestall potential problems. In the fall, we are also beginning a required series of meetings for all writing tutors. The purpose of these meeting is to discuss issues, exchange ideas, and maintain a sense of community among the tutors. Last, I presented a faculty workshop for all part-time faculty in August of 1995. This workshop explored practical methods and models of writing in the classroom to facilitate learning and prepare students for longer and more complex writing assignments: research projects, article reviews, and technology reports.

Beyond communicating within the college, we also need to communicate with other WAC programs. To this purpose, several of the Writing Fellows and I attended two conferences during the school year. The first was "Michigan Writing Centers Project Idea Days" held at University of Michigan-Flint. In addition to myself, those attending from MCCC were Carol Sliwka and Cheryl Bunker. At this conference, colleges from Michigan shared ideas about program development, staffing writing centers, financing, and securing physical facilities. Ms. Sliwka and Ms. Bunker attended a special session on problems confronting writing center tutors.

The second conference was the "East Central Writing Centers Association" held at Michigan State University. This conference was attended by Cheryl Bunker, Carrie Nartker, and myself. The conference focused on the use of on-line technology in writing centers (there are several

articles about this subject in the Spring issue of Language For Learning in the appendix). I also attended the Conference on College Composition and Communication held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and while there I attended several sessions on WAC.

In the fall of 1996, Dr. John Holladay, Dr. Robert Merkel, and myself will be presenting a panel discussion on WAC at the Trends Conference in Traverse City, Michigan. In addition, Dr. Holladay, Dr. Merkel, and I have submitted a proposal for a WAC session at the Spring 1997 CCCC Conference in Phoenix, Arizona. Our purpose is to present our program to other schools and become part of an ongoing dialogue with other institutions.

The 1995-1996 school year was our first year under the new financing plan for WAC. Under the old plan, writing fellows were remunerated at the end of each semester with a stipend. Under the new system we awarded scholarships toward education. Each Writing Fellow for 1995-1996 received a scholarship that paid for one three credit hour course and $50.00 worth of textbooks or supplies from the MCCC bookstore.

The only flaw in the new system was that our attrition rate for new Writing Fellows increased significantly this year. To that end, we restructured the scholarship for 1996-1997 so that each Writing Fellow will have course tuition paid in advance, but will not be able to use the bookstore funds until after successfully completing the semester. We hope this will provide enough incentive to lower the attrition rate. In addition, the college graciously agreed to increase the bookstore scholarship money to $100.00 for Novice Writing Fellows, and $150.00 for Senior Writing Fellows.

As a final note, we also initiated a Writing Fellow of the Year Award for 1995-1996. Our expectation for this award was to recognize one individual who best exemplified dedication to helping students learn to write and an ability to work well with supervisors, other tutors, and students. I decided to let the Writing Fellows themselves select the winner, and this year it was almost unanimous for George Rhodes. Mr. Rhodes was presented with his award at the annual Honors Banquet.

While we had a successful year, there is always much to be done. As stated earlier, we face the challenge of joining cyber-space technology, we have the ongoing task of recruiting new Writing Fellows for each semester, we must continually update our program's structure so that it best fits the needs of our students, and we must collect and analyze data so that our program can evolve and remain a viable asset to faculty and students at MCCC.

IV. 1995-96 Writing Fellows

A Review of the Writing Fellow Program

"Who is this walking oxymoron called a peer tutor? How are new peer tutors supposed to define themselves and their role in students' learning processes?" (qtd. in Hemmeter 35). Dina Fayer, a peer tutor herself at the University of California, asked this question in an attempt to define the complex, shifting roles of writing tutors. While the Writing Center may be, on its most basic level, a place, it is more importantly comprised of people—or in our case Writing Fellows. These writing tutors represent a variety of academic interests, age groups, career goals,

and academic disciplines; but they all share the philosophy that all students can learn to improve their ability to think critically and write well. While the process of tutoring can be a frustrating experience for both tutor and tutee, our anecdotal research strongly suggests that Writing Fellows find tutoring to be rewarding and gratifying work, and that students appreciate the Writing Fellows' contributions to their writing improvement. Writing Fellows also recognize the need for their services, and honestly celebrate the successes, large and small, students experience as a result of the combined efforts of tutors and tutees.

In this section I want to focus on what I think is one of the strengths of MCCC's Writing Fellow program—professionalism. There is no universal description of a writing tutor: how they are recruited and trained, how they tutor, how they interact with students and faculty. Yet, our Writing Fellows share some traits that speak to a professional attitude and work ethic. Betty Moore notes in her article, "Toward a Definition of Professionalism for Writing Center Tutors," that we can identify some common traits of professionalism in writing tutors. For example, "The ability to work with people in situations we feel ill-equipped to handle." In addition, "We know they have an understanding of people and how they learn, and they have a thorough knowledge of the process of writing and how to talk about that process" (11). The Writing Fellows at MCCC certainly fit this description.

At MCCC we attempt to recruit a group of motivated students who meet criteria of personal responsibility, academic excellence, and ability to interact with people. This academic year we recruited 30 new Writing Fellows who met these requirements. While not all of them completed the program—our attrition was seven—we know that those who did found their tutoring experiences to be both personally and professionally rewarding (see Writing Fellow comments in Part VIII).

Writing Fellows have a difficult and time consuming job. They must work equally well with faculty and students, they must understand a variety of faculty instructions on how to complete a writing assignment, they must translate what Murial Harris calls "teacher language" into student language, and they must convince students they can improve their writing—many of these tasks involve complex tutoring skills.

Writing Fellows must also recognize and evaluate each student's needs. While one student may need to talk about ideas, another may need to learn a specific format such as MLA. While one student may have writer's block or fear of writing, another student may need to review the rules of grammar. And while one student may have come to the Writing Center voluntarily to work on improving his or her writing, another student may have been required to have a conference and cannot figure out why. In each of these cases, the Writing Fellow is responsible for the learning atmosphere of the conference, the direction of the tutoring process, and the success or failure the conference engenders.

This does not mean, however, that the Writing Fellow is in total control of the conference. The Writing Fellow must also know when to allow the student to take control of his or her own writing improvement. "Another trait of professionalism is the ability to assure students right away that peer tutoring has nothing to do with limiting options and everything to do with broadening them" (Moore 12). Writing Centers are often misperceived as places of remediation for those who cannot "cut college work," and Writing Fellows are equally misperceived as the agents of this public display of inadequacy. In fact, the opposite is true. Writing Fellows do not write students' papers, "fix" papers, or serve as editors; they do offer students strategies to develop ideas, revise drafts, and edit their own work. These are life-long strategies essential to critical thinking and writing. The goal of our Writing Center is to enable students to use these strategies with all forms of writing.

At the core of tutor training at MCCC is the Advanced Composition course. In this course Writing Fellows work diligently on tutoring skills--managing the multiplicity of conference experiences--and their own writing skills. Both the tutoring strategies discussed in the preceding paragraphs and the writing strategies they learn, contribute to their professionalism. In putting together this training program, I look at the various types of writing assigned by MCCC instructors, and I attempt to simulate these assignments or create parallel writing experiences for Writing Fellows. In this way, each Writing Fellow feels confident when explaining the process of writing a specific type of paper. For example, the article review is a common assignment, so each of the Writing Fellows learns about process and product for an article review. This practice continues with other forms of writing such as the research paper and the argumentative essay. Of course we cannot recreate every writing experience, but the ones we use are supported by our collected data from the Writing Center.

Finally, another important aspect of a professional tutoring program, besides tutoring and writing skills, is staff experience. While it is inevitable at a two year school that students transfer or complete their degrees, we still maintain a reasonably experienced staff. On average, Writing Fellows at MCCC work two to three semesters before leaving the program. We have a commitment from eighteen 1995-1996 Writing Fellows to return to the program for fall 1996, and we have recruited sixteen new Writing Fellows for the fall Advanced Composition course. As the list below indicates, we had several Writing Fellows with three or more semesters experience.

As you can see, the job of a Writing Fellow is complex and demanding. Those students who become successful Writing Fellows display rare ability, work-ethic, and professionalism. I believe they are one of the college's most valuable assets.

The list of 1995-1996 Writing Fellows follows with the number of completed semesters of experience for each in parentheses (combined 81 semesters of experience).

Diana Agy (4)
Brenda Aniol (1)
Tracy Boudrie (2)
Cheryl Bunker (3)
Sue Cairl (3)
Elizabeth DuMoulin (1)
Marge Eastman (2)
Alicia Ferris (1)
Angela Friedline (1)
Kathy Hammond (4)
Tammy Hartung (8)
Jennifer Hasley (2)
Denise Labardee (3)
Christina Iacobellis (2)
Armand LarRochelle (3)
Kathy Leonhardt (3)
Molly Lindsey (1)
Julie Montri (2)
Steve Mullins (1)
Carrie Nartker (3)
Nichole Nemec (3)
Evelyn Nofziger (2)
Lisa Pierce (2)
Tara Pogarch (3)
George Rhodes (2)
Melissa Russeau (1)
Katrina Seguin (1)
Janine Sitch (1)
Carol Sliwka (3)
Lisa Smith (2)
Tricia Spitulski (2)
Andrew St. Pierre (1)
Allison Taylor (3)
Tina Waterstradt (3)
Emily Woltman (1)
Sarah Younglove (1)

V. Statistics

The Role of Statistics in WAC

Most of the support for WAC in the research literature has been anecdotal, and many researchers have noted the lack of empirical data in support of WAC. Unfortunately, one effect of this data shortage has been the tendency for faculty to disregard or marginalize writing centers as places of remediation where spelling and punctuation checkers work. While anecdotal support is valid, other forms of data may help significantly to change attitudes about writing centers and what writing tutors do. In addition, statistics demonstrate patterns of change in the types of writing assignments, frequency of writing assignments, and the number of students seeking help through conferencing. This knowledge allows us to improve our WAC program as the needs of our students change.

Because Monroe County Community College is a teaching institution rather than a research institution, the statistics the Writing Fellows and I generate are primarily for internal use, such as fine-tuning the WAC program. For example, using this information I have modified the direction of Advanced Composition course to focus on the process of developing specific types of writing, I have increased the amount of time spent on specific tutoring skills, and I have monitored the skills and strategies used by the Writing Fellows in conferences. In addition, I published some of these statistics in our newsletter, Language For Learning, in an effort to communicate with faculty and increase their role in the WAC process. I think statistics can play a vital role in the continuing re-education of faculty and staff about our Writing Center and its objectives. In examining statistics for 1995-1996 we learn several things. The number of writing conferences rose 7% from 1994-1995 to 1995-1996. In 1994-1995 we completed 1788 conferences while in 1995-1996 we completed 1917 conferences. This increase occurred, moreover, in spite of a slight decline in overall college enrollment. These current numbers were also somewhat negatively influenced by the elimination of a Writing Fellow staff at Whitman and Jefferson--while we still assign Writing Fellows to specific courses at Whitman and Jefferson, the ratio of the number of conferences to Writing Fellows from 1994-1995 was too low to use a fixed schedule.

The statistics also indicate the frequency of types of writing assignments. On MCCC campus, the 500+ word theme is the popular assignment, followed by the research paper, and the book or article review. Other writing assigned with frequency are lab reports and academic journals.

Something not measured by this statistical study is the use of "writing to learn" or what Margot Soven calls "constructing assignment for teaching discovery." Soven notes that most writing assignments can be "classified according to their major purpose: assignments that both help students synthesize course material and test what they have learned (usually graded), and assignments that have as their sole purpose to help them learn course material (rarely graded)" (6). As indicated above, most of the writing at MCCC seems to fit into the first category--the finished product. I think we should continue to encourage this type of writing; however, we need to do more of the ungraded "discovery writing" in courses as well. Discovery writing entails assignments such as: in-class writing, informal response papers, journal writing, class lecture summaries, or any other writing that encourages students to "record their reactions, opinions, feelings, perceptions, intuitions, understanding, explanation, and questions" (Soven 7). As part of

my efforts to increase this type of writing, I presented a model for constructing "discovery writing" at the "part-time faculty workshop" in August of 1995. I expect to also poll the faculty in a campus survey planned for 1996-1997 to ascertain how many of them use these assignments, want to use them, or are simply unaware of discovery writing. The statistics also indicate that most writing is expository, followed by persuasive writing as a close second. Other rhetorical modes represented are description, formal definitions, compare/contrast, analogy, and division/classification. These are standard across most college campuses.

We also see that when students come to the Writing Center they are most often at the drafting stage of the writing process. The drafting stage includes revision--looking at organization, paragraphing, thesis statement, transitions, and sentence structure. In later drafts students may work on editing--grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Many of our students, however, are at the prewriting stage--developing ideas, talking about audience and purpose, narrowing a topic, or planning a writing strategy.

Writing Fellows most frequently assisted students with developing content. This points to a lack of supporting examples, expert testimony, statistics, or other means of substantiating the student's thought process. Second was assistance with writing introductions and conclusions, and third was assistance with thesis statements. All of these categories are "high order" concerns. Writing Fellows are trained to deal with these first. We encourage students, however, to return to the Writing Center to work on "lower order" concerns such as spelling and punctuation.

In looking at "lower order" concerns we see that most students have problems with syntax--putting words together to form sentences--and punctuation. Following closely are problems with grammar, diction, and spelling.

The last item of information from the statistical data is the number of faculty from each division who have students using the Writing Center--assigned or voluntary. As has been for several years, Humanities finished first by a large margin. Second was Business, followed by Industrial Tech, Science/Math, and Health Science. While the numbers for the divisions, other than Humanities, are small, I am encouraged by the increases from 1994-1995 in Industrial Tech and Science/Math.

Ultimately, statistics have no real value unless we act on them and use them to develop positive change. At MCCC I intend to use these statistics to examine trends and develop long range plans. Since it has only been two years since I took over the program, the statistical data does not yet produce this type of extended information. However, I think that a five year study will produce valuable information for our WAC program. Therefore, one of my long range plans is to conduct such a study in fall of 1998.

I will also continue to use these statistics to fine-tune the Advanced Composition course. I will look at the types of writing assigned on campus and adjust the training accordingly. I think this makes our program organic rather than static, and serves our students' needs best.

On a smaller note, I have also made changes in how the statistics are gathered and recorded. I have restructured the "Writing Fellow Report" form that Writing Fellows complete for each conference. The new form is more in line with the tutoring practices of our Writing Fellows and parallels the statistics form we use to record the data (see appendix). The primary changes include eliminating redundancies and changing language to create a more detailed report; therefore, the data should still be consistent with the old model of data collection. I have also redesigned the Writing Center Evaluation Questionnaire (see appendix). I think it is easier to use and more clearly structured. While these are small improvements, they will make data collection more precise and easier to compile.

The statistics following are divided by semester: fall, winter, and spring with the last page as the total of all three semesters.

The Writing Center: Fall Semester 1995 Statistical Data

Dates: Semester Fall from Sept to Dec Year: 1995

No. of Writing Conferences:	Main Campus	917	Appointment	384	
	Whitman Campus	17	Fellowed Class	474	
	Jefferson Center	00	Walk-In	76	
Total:	934				
Writing Assignment:	500 Word Theme	563	Research Paper	124	Creative Writing 06
	Journal	39	Essay Test	28	Resume 00
	Note Taking	02	Book Review	69	Lab Report 13
	Outline	19	Paragraph	15	Other 14
Type of Writing Assignment:	Narrative	27	Descriptive	59	
	Expository	267	Persuasive	176	
Method of Organization:	Chronological	03	Cause/Effect	00	
	Definition	53	Comp/Contrast	38	
	Division/Class	14	Analogy	45	
	Example	29	Other	08	
Stage of Writing Process:	Prewriting	107	Drafting	531	
	Revision	142	Editing	81	
	Final Product	44	Rewrite of Final	09	
WF Assisted with:					
Content	Subject	45	Thesis	139	
	Logic	35	Development	286	
	Audience	10	Other	07	
Organization	Intro /Conclusion	282	Body	97	
	Transitions	83	Format	179	
Grammar / Mechanics	Punctuation	113	Spelling	44	
	Grammar	86	Syntax	148	
	Diction	39	Other	05	

Department Represented:	Hum/Soc Science	766	Health Science	04
	Business	72	Science/Math	65
	Ind Tech	27		

The Writing Center: Winter Semester 1996 Statistical Data

Dates: Semester WI from Jan to Apr Year: 1996

No. of Writing Conferences:	Main Campus	893	Appointment	358	
	Whitman Campus	27	Fellowed Class	520	
	Jefferson Center	00	Walk-In	42	
Total: 920					
Writing Assignment:	500 Word Theme	446	Research Paper	234	Creative Writing 01
	Journal	02	Essay Test	17	Resume 00
	Note Taking	00	Book Review	60	Lab Report 81
	Outline	07	Paragraph	05	Other 03
Type of Writing Assignment:	Narrative	43	Descriptive	68	
	Expository	361	Persuasive	184	
Method of Organization:	Chronological	37	Cause/Effect	00	
	Definition	17	Comp/Contrast	18	
	Division/Class	07	Analogy	28	
	Example	06	Other	04	
Stage of Writing Process:	Prewriting	75	Drafting	610	
	Revision	75	Editing	21	
	Final Product	48	Rewrite of Final	11	
WF Assisted with:					
Content	Subject	46	Thesis	110	
	Logic	38	Development	273	
	Audience	38	Other	05	
Organization	Intro /Conclusion	269	Body	210	
	Transitions	58	Format	236	
Grammar / Mechanics	Punctuation	149	Spelling	58	
	Grammar	67	Syntax	164	
	Diction	63	Other	04	
Department Represented:	Hum/Soc Science	586	Health Science	33	
	Business	120	Science/Math	47	
	Ind Tech	134			

The Writing Center: Spring Semester 1996 Statistical Data

Dates: Semester SP from May to June Year: 1996

No. of Writing Conferences:	Main Campus	63	Appointment	22	
	Whitman Campus	00	Fellowed Class	39	
	Jefferson Center	00	Walk-In	02	
Total: 63					
Writing Assignment: 500 Word Theme	51	Research Paper	12	Creative Writing	00
Journal	00	Essay Test	00	Resume	00
Note Taking	00	Book Review	00	Lab Report	00
Outline	00	Paragraph	00	Other	00
Type of Writing Assignment:	Narrative	02	Descriptive	06	
	Expository	21	Persuasive	06	
Method of Organization:	Chronological	00	Cause/Effect	00	
	Definition	01	Comp/Contrast	01	
	Division/Class	00	Analogy	00	
	Example	00	Other	00	
Stage of Writing Process:	Prewriting	06	Drafting	26	
	Revision	12	Editing	02	
	Final Product	01	Rewrite of Final	01	
WF Assisted with:					
Content	Subject	00	Thesis	09	
	Logic	06	Development	23	
	Audience	00	Other	00	
Organization	Intro /Conclusion	25	Body	00	
	Transitions	00	Format	12	
Grammar / Mechanics	Punctuation	10	Spelling	02	
	Grammar	04	Syntax	06	
	Diction	04	Other	01	
Department Represented:	Hum/Soc Science	61	Health Science	00	
	Business	00	Science/Math	02	
	Ind Tech	00			

The Writing Center: 1995-96 Statistical Data

Dates: Semester FL-WI-SP from Sept to June Year: 1995-96

No. of Writing Conferences:	Main Campus	1873	Appointment	764	
	Whitman Campus	44	Fellowed Class	1033	
	Jefferson Center	00	Walk-In	120	
Total:	1917				
Writing Assignment:	500 Word Theme	1060	Research Paper	370	Creative Writing 07
	Journal	41	Essay Test	45	Resume 00
	Note Taking	02	Book Review	129	Lab Report 94
	Outline	26	Paragraph	20	Other 17
Type of Writing Assignment:	Narrative	72	Descriptive	133	
	Expository	649	Persuasive	366	
Method of Organization:	Chronological	40	Cause/Effect	00	
	Definition	71	Comp/Contrast	57	
	Division/Class	21	Analogy	73	
	Example	35	Other	12	
Stage of Writing Process:	Prewriting	188	Drafting	1167	
	Revision	229	Editing	104	
	Final Product	93	Rewrite of Final	21	
WF Assisted with Content	Subject	91	Thesis	139	
	Logic	79	Development	582	
	Audience	48	Other	12	
Organization	Intro /Conclusion	576	Body	307	
	Transitions	141	Format	427	
Grammar / Mechanics	Punctuation	272	Spelling	104	
	Grammar	157	Syntax	318	
	Diction	106	Other	10	
Department Represented:	Hum/Soc Science	1413	Health Science	37	
	Business	192	Science/Math	114	
	Ind Tech	161			

VI. Scheduling

Providing Services to Our Students

Writing Fellows are scheduled in two ways. At the heart of our WAC program is the assignment of each Writing Fellow to a specific course. We do this to create a unique academic situation with Writing Fellows placed as a buffer between the assignment moving from instructor to student and the assignment returning from student to instructor. As Barbara Wenner points out, however, "with the student as conduit, both teacher and tutor often get a rather puzzling picture of what happens in the 'other' conference" (5). At MCCC we try to strengthen the relationships among instructors, tutors, and students so the Writing Fellow is more than just conduit. Our goal is to create a three-way relationship with as little breakdown of communication as possible.

The WAC model we use entails the following procedures. Each Writing Fellow meets with the instructor of the course to which he or she is assigned. In this meeting, the instructor provides the Writing Fellow with the writing assignments for the course and the requirements such as length, rhetorical mode, due dates, audience, purpose, and format. The instructor may also ask the Writing Fellow to introduce him or herself to the class, explain the WAC program, and attend the class when the writing assignment is given to the students. Following this, the Writing Fellow is responsible for completing a written explanation of the assignment and returning a copy to the instructor. This mitigates any misunderstandings between Writing Fellow and faculty about the assignment.

Approximately two weeks before the final assignment is due, the instructor collects first drafts of the papers and hands them over to the Writing Fellow. The Writing Fellow, at this time, schedules a 30 minute appointment for each of the students--approximately 15 to 20 for most classes. The Writing Fellow reads each of the papers and fills out an extensive written report prior to the conference. During the conference the Writing Fellow and student go over the report and discuss problem areas in the paper. The approach during the conference is non-directive--that is the Writing Fellow primarily asks questions of the student so that the student is able to detect his or her own errors. The Writing Fellow then offers several strategies for improvement without, once again, being directive or attempting to "fix" the student's paper. Finally the student is given a copy of the Writing Fellow report to use as reference when rewriting the draft and to attach to his or her final assignment to be turned in to the instructor.

This completes the triangle. The assignment has moved from instructor to student, from student to tutor, and back again to student and to instructor. In this way there is a paper trail that not only provides progress check points, but also develops a three-way bond among instructor, tutor, and student. In addition, we encourage all three participants to communicate with each other at any step of the process. It is not uncommon for Writing Fellows to check in with instructors on a weekly schedule, or for instructors to request a meeting with a Writing Fellow to clarify some aspect of the assignment or forestall some problem.

At MCCC we encourage this triangular relationship. While we do not actually have students, tutors, and instructors in a room at the same time, we encourage as much contact as possible between the Writing Fellow and instructor, the Writing Fellow and student, and

student and instructor. This is effective for several reasons. On one level, Writing Fellows, students themselves, are allowed to work with an instructor on a more equal level. Both the instructor and Writing Fellow have the same objective--to help students become better critical thinkers and writers. In addition, instructors are allowed to see students in a different light--working with a student in similar ways as they might a colleague. A sense of trust, responsibility, and respect is developed in both directions, and the positive elements of the instructor-tutor relationship are then passed on to the tutor-student relationship. Writing Fellows approach conferences with more confidence because they understand the assignment and because they have the confidence of the instructor in their work. As Belinda Wood Droll notes in her article "Teacher Expectations: A Powerful Third Force in Tutoring Sessions" if we are to have faith in the tutoring process, it is important for tutors to help students with the areas the instructor wants them to have help with (5). When the instructor can examine the first draft of a paper, the Writing Fellows comments, and the improved final draft, the instructor has a picture of the development of the paper from start to finish. Besides meeting our first goal of improving students thinking and writing, the procedure increases the instructor's confidence in the Writing Fellows, in the WAC program, and most importantly in the students' work.

In addition to the fellowed-class program, each of the Writing Fellows is also assigned to work two hours each in the Writing Center. This allows other students not in a Fellowed class to use the Writing Center services. This academic year we have increased this type of Writing Center use by about 10%. We actively advertise this service through memos to the faculty, and by passing out literature about the program and Writing Center schedules to students on campus. From anecdotal information, we have determined that students who are required to use the Writing Center as part of a fellowed class often return for other classes of their own volition. This strongly suggests that the Writing Fellows are meeting their goals, and that students recognize a good thing when they find it.

In examining the weekly Writing Center schedules, one can see that we try to make our time coverage as comprehensive as possible. We never have more than two Writing Fellows working at the same time, and we attempt to make tutoring available in the evenings and on Saturdays, as well as during weekday hours. In a community college setting these are important to providing comprehensive services. As stated earlier in this report, we recognize that our students are not the typical four-year college student. Any service as important as ours, must be available, timely, and consistent. In other words, the students can count on a Writing Fellow when they need one. We think our method of scheduling does the most possible to ensure meeting these objectives.

WRITING FELLOW ASSIGNMENTS: FALL 1995

Instructor	Course	Day(s)	Time	Enrollment	Writing Fellows
John Holladay	Phil 151 01	MWF	9-10	30	Christina Vandevelde Lisa Crist
	Phil 152 01	T/R	9:30-11	26	Christina Iacobellis Carol Sliwka
	Engl 252 02	MWF	11-12	22	Tara Pogarch
Robert Merkel	Engl 256-01	T/R	8-9:30	21	Janine Sitch
Larry Leach	Phil 253 01	M/W	2-3:30	22	Michael Taylor
	*Phil 152 51	T/R	9-10:30	24	Tricia Spitulski
Michael Mohn	Mech 101-01	MWF	8-9	24	Evelyn Nofziger
	Mech 101-02	T/R	7-9 PM	25	David Grisham
	Mech 102-01	M/W	1-4	17	Marge Eastman
Marge Bacarella	Polsc 151-04	T/R	9:30-11	35	Allyson Motylinski Elizabeth DuMoulin
	Polsc 151-11	M/W	2-3:30	34	Kathy Leonhardt George Rhodes
James Devries	Anthr 152-01	MWF	10-11	28	Diana Agy Denise Labardee
	Hist 153-01	T/R	11-12:30	18	Cheryl Bunker
Robert Tarrant	Acct 251-01	M/W	5-7 PM	21	Tammy Hartung
	*Acct 251-51	T/R	5:30-7:30 PM	15	Sue Cairl
B. J. Harmon	Math 157-01	MWF	10-11	30	Allison Taylor Nichole Nemec
	Math 157-02	T/R	11-12:30	36	Tina Waterstradt Armand LaRochelle
	Math 164-01	MTWF	9-10	34	Jennifer Hasley Tracy Boudrie
Terry Telfer	*Engl 251-01	T/R	3-4:30	11	Carol Sliwka
Barbara Long	Physc151-01	M/W	5:30-7 PM	12	Kathy Hammond
Wendy Wysocki	BMGT101-01	M/W	11-12:30	29	Carrie Nartker Kelly Doty
Ann Marie Snider	Psych151-1	T/R	3-4:30	31	Julie Montri Lisa Pierce

WRITING FELLOW ASSIGNMENTS: Winter 1996

Instructor	Course	Day(s)	Time	Enrollment	Writing Fellows
John Holladay	Phil 151-01	MWF	11-12	25	Tara Pogarch Brian McDermott
	Phil 152-01	T/R	9:30-11	25	Julie Montri Steve Mullins
Robert Merkel	Engl 256-01	T/R	11-12:30	19	Lisa Pierce Christina Iacobellis
	Mus 165-01	T/R	9:30-11:00	14	Cheryl Bunker
Larry Leach	Spch 151-03	T/R	10-11:30	09	Kathie Leonhardt
Michael Mohn	Mech 101-01	MW	10-12	24	Armand LaRochelle Angela Friedline
	Mech 101-02	M/W	5-7 PM	25	Andrew St. Pierre Melissa Russeau
	Weld 105-01	T/R	5-7 PM	06	Lisa Smith
Marge Bacarella	Polsc 151-02	T/R	1:30-3	30	Tina Waterstradt Jennifer Cooley
	Polsc 252-01	M/W	7-8:30 PM	15	Allison Taylor
James Devries	Hist 256-01	MWF	12-1	13	Diana Agy
Robert Tarrant	Acct 254-01	M/W	5-7 PM	16	Sarah Younglove
	*Acct 254-51	T/R	5:30-7:30 PM	08	Evelyn Nofziger
B. J. Harmon	Math 172-01	MTWF	8-9	24	Tammy Hartung Nichole Neme
Wendy Wysocki	Bmgt 101-01	M/W	11-12:30	29	Katrina Seguin Emily Woltman
	*Bmgt 101-51	F	9-12	13	Tricia Spitulski
Diane Vajcner	Psych151-12	MW	7-8:30 PM	11	Marge Eastman
Stan Davis	Soc 252-01	MWF	11-12	25	Kathy Hammond George Rhodes
Cheryl McKay	Acctg 205-01	T/R	7-8:30 PM	17	Tracy Boudrie
Dean Kerste	Engrg 152-01	R	1:30-4:30	29	Molly Lindsey Ronnie Combs
	Drftg 128-01	R	8:30-12	16	Jennifer Hasley

Bill McCloskey	Engl 260-02	M/W	5:30-7PM	11	Brenda Aniol
Robert Leski	Soc 151-04	M/W	1:30-3	30	Carrie Nartker Alicia Ferris

*Indicates Course is at the Whitman Center

Writing Fellow Cheryl Bunker discusses strategies for improvement with student Rachel Krug.

Writing Center Schedule: Fall 1995

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8 -9		Kathy Hammond		Kathy Hammond	Allison Taylor	
9-10	Nichole Nemec	Denise Labardee	Nichole Nemec	Denise Labardee	Carrie Nartker Allison Taylor	
10-11	Evelyn Nofziger	Julie Montri Jennifer Hasley	Tracy Boudrie	Julie Montri Jennifer Hasley	Tracy Boudrie Evelyn Nofziger	Marge Eastman
11-12	Tara Pogarch Lisa Pierce		Tara Pogarch Carrie Nartker			Marge Eastman
12-1	Cheryl Bunker Christina Iacobellis	Tina Waterstradt Elizabeth DuMoulin		Elizabeth DuMoulin	Cheryl Bunker Christina Iacobellis	
1-2	Armand LaRochelle	Diana Agy Tina Waterstradt	Kathy Leonhardt	Diana Agy		
2-3	Armand LaRochelle	Carol Sliwka	Kathy Leonhardt	George Rhodes	George Rhodes	
3-4		Carol Sliwka				
4-5	Tammy Hartung Tricia Spitulski					
5-6	Tammy Hartung Tricia Spitulski		Lisa Pierce			
6-7	Janine Sitch		Janine Sitch			

Writing Center Schedule: Winter 1996

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8 -9	Nichole Nemec	Tammy Hartung Trina Seguin		Tammy Hartung Trina Seguin	Armand LaRochelle	
9-10	Kathy Hammond Nichole Nemec	Jennifer Hasley Christina Iacobellis	Kathie Leonhardt Kathy Hammond	Julie Montri Alicia Ferris	Evelyn Nofziger Armand LaRochelle	
10-11	Brenda Aniol Andrew St. Pierre	Jennifer Hasley Christina Iacobellis	Kathie Leonhardt Jennifer Cooley	Julie Montri Alicia Ferris	Cheryl Bunker Evelyn Nofziger	
11-12	Tara Pogarch Molly Lindsey	Tracy Boudrie Angela Friedline	Jennifer Cooley Emily Woltman	Tracy Boudrie Brian McDermott	Tara Pogarch Emily Woltman	Tricia Spitulski
12-1	Lisa Smith Cheryl Bunker	Marge Eastman Angela Friedline	Lisa Smith Diana Agy	Marge Eastman	Molly Lindsey	Tricia Spitulski
1-2		Ronnie Combs	Diana Agy Lisa Pierce	George Rhodes Ronnie Combs	George Rhodes Lisa Pierce	
2-3	Melissa Russeau				Steve Mullins	
3-4	Melissa Russeau		Tina Waterstradt Brian McDermott	Carrie Nartker	Steve Mullins	
4-5			Tina Waterstradt	Carrie Nartker		
5-6			Sarah Younglove Brenda Aniiol			
6-7		Allison Taylor	Sarah Younglove	Allison Taylor Andrew St. Pierre		

Writing Center Schedule: Spring 96

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:00-9:00		Julie Montri	George Rhodes	George Rhodes	Julie Montri	
9:00-10:00	Cheryl Bunker	Julie Montri			Julie Montri	
10:00-11:00	Cheryl Bunker					
11:00-12:00	Cheryl Bunker					
12:00-1:00	Cheryl Bunker Carrie Nartker		Carrie Nartker			
1:00-2:00	Cheryl Bunker Carrie Nartker		Carrie Nartker			
2:00-3:00	Tricia Spitulaki Carrie Nartker		George Rhodes	George Rhodes		
3:00-4:00	Tricia Spitulaki					
4:00-5:00	Tricia Spitulaki Julie Montri					
5:00-6:00	Tricia Spitulaki George Rhodes					
6:00-7:00	Tricia Spitulaki					

VII. Program Evaluation by Students

Anecdotal and Statistical Data

This year we had 408 students complete the program evaluation form, and overall their responses were very positive. The statistics in this section are divided as follows: fall semester responses, winter semester responses, and spring semester responses.

Sixty one percent of those who responded indicated they came to the Writing Center because it was required. Students may be required to use the Writing Center in two ways: having a Writing Fellow assigned to the course, or having the instructor require a Writing Center session before submitting a writing assignment for evaluation. In 1995-96 about 40% indicated they had a Writing Fellow assigned to the course, suggesting instructors who do not have assigned Writing Fellows are, nevertheless, requiring students to use the Writing Center.

Since the comments by these students are positive--over 96% favorable in every evaluation category--the evidence strongly suggests that when students are required to have a writing conference, they find it to be a valuable experience. This strongly suggests to me, as the coordinator of the program, that we are on track in our methodology. I have discovered, through attending conferences and talking to other program directors that many universities and colleges do not require students to use their writing centers, and the result is that they do not have much business. Others link their programs to remediation, leaving those students who are not in remedial courses to make their own decisions about using the writing center.

In contrast, I think we have an excellent balance in our program. When participating in our program, faculty may encourage or require students across the curriculum to have at least one writing conference. This serves to break the often invisible, but very real, barrier between students and support services. In other words, many students would not otherwise seek the help of the Writing Center on their own because they are intimidated or lack the skills required to initiate the process needed to contact the Writing Center. Each one of our Writing Fellows has a story about a student who overcomes his or her reticence to use support services because a writing conference was so productive. As Judy Gill states in "Another Look at WAC and the Writing Center," " In many ways, it is far more rewarding to convert an unwilling, passive, disengaged, even hostile student writer into one who cares about her writing for herself" (175).

Preceding the above mentioned statistics are students' comments about the program. This year I divided these comments into two categories: first time users of the Writing Center and repeat users of the Writing Center. I did this because I was interested in noting the differences in responses to see if the anecdotal information supports the statistical data, suggesting that first time users are likely to return to the Writing Center for help. Thirty-three percent said this was their first conference with a Writing Fellow, and ninety-nine percent said they would use the Writing Center again. This seems to be strong support for the program and for our method of requiring students to attend. In addition, ninety-seven percent found using the Writing Center convenient, and one hundred percent found the Writing Fellows to be courteous and respectful.

The obvious conclusions to be drawn from this statistical and anecdotal data is that our program is working and serving our students well.

Evaluation Questionnaire Comments

(Comments from those using the Writing Center for the first time.)

"I think this is a big help because it gives me a chance to get help with someone who understands what is expected of my paper instead of just having a friend reread it."

"Elizabeth helped direct me to forming a thesis. I couldn't have gotten over my writing block without her."

"The conference was both informative and enjoyable. I'd never heard about paragraph mapping."

"More evening hours should be available."

"Even though this was my first time, I will be back."

"The conference was very effective and I recommend students to use the Writing Center for help in writing their papers."

"Cheryl Bunker helped me to identify the weak areas of my writing. She also helped me to think more effectively about my writing."

"My conference was required because of a class, but without it my paper may not have received as good a grade as it received."

"Hats off to the Writing Fellows. They helped tremendously and were extremely patient. Recommendations will always come from this student."

"I was really happy when I was done with the Writing Fellow. She was very helpful."

"This conference was extremely beneficial to me and I truly appreciate a program like this one. Without the help of my Writing Fellow I most definitely would have had a poor paper."

"She pointed out my strengths in writing and also gave me constructive suggestions."

"I would like more private sessions, instead of being in an active room."

"I would have been lost without it!"

"He stated generalized areas rather than explaining or showing me why I made the errors he thought I did."

(Comments from those returning to the Writing Center.)

"I felt the Writing Fellow p[illegible]d out some obvious faults in my writing. I feel I will write a much better paper."

"It helped a lot to have someone else look at my paper and read through it because that will tell me if it's written so that it is easy to follow and to read."

"She [Writing Fellow] gave me some handouts on commas and other papers that will help me in the future."

"Allow Writing Fellows more time to go over papers with students."

"I can see a huge difference in my papers since working with the Writing Fellows."

"The Writing Fellow helped me without making me feel less intelligent. Thanks!"

"George was very generous in explaining my mistakes. He gave me good examples to use and helped me organize my paper."

"I liked Diana a lot. She walked me through my paper in detail and gave me really good suggestions."

"I enjoy getting constructive criticism because it makes me a better writer and it points out the things that my reader might not understand."

"It never ceases to amaze me what others find in my papers. I never seem to be able to be objective enough about my own writing."

"It is not convenient for me to use the Writing Center because usually I have to get off work early to see my Writing Fellow."

"I'm glad a Writing Fellow was assigned to my classes because it ensures that I am following requirements. Helps a lot."

"She gives suggestions instead of just telling me what's wrong and to fix it."

"Have Writing Fellows at the Whitman Center for Spring semester, even if it is by appointment only. This is a good program. Keep it up!"

"I appreciate the help from the Writing Fellows and I enjoy the interaction with them."

"My paper seems to be a more well prepared paper. I believe this is due to my Writing Fellow."

Fall Semester: 1995

The Writing Center

Student Evaluation Questionnaire Statistics

The total number of respondents was 207. Percentages indicated as 1% may actually be less.

Why did you come to The Writing Center?

Course requirement:	66%	136/207
Needed help with specific assignment:	22%	47/207
To improve writing skills:	11%	22/207
Reputation of the Writing Center:(less than)	01%	02/207

How did you arrange your Writing Fellow conference?

Writing Fellow assigned to course:	34%	70/207
Made an appointment:	59%	122/207
Walk-in (no appointment):	07%	15/207

Was this your first conference with a Writing Fellow?

yes: 31% 64/207 no: 69% 143/207

Did you find it convenient to use the Writing Center?

yes: 96% 199/207 no: 04% 08/207

Did the Writing Fellow identify problems in your writing of which you were unaware?

yes: 94% 194/207 no: 06% 13/207

Was the Writing Fellow courteous and respectful?

yes: 100% 207/207 no: 00% 00/207

Do you think you will use the Writing Center again?

yes: 99% 191/207 no: 01% 01/207

How helpful were the written comments on your paper?

Very Helpful:	70%	144/207
Helpful:	29%	62/207
Marginally Helpful:	.5%	01/207
Not Helpful:	.5%	01/207

Fall Semester: 1995

The Writing Center

Student Evaluation Questionnaire Statistics

How helpful was your conference with a Writing Fellow?

Very Helpful:	74%	153/207
Helpful:	25%	51/207
Marginally Helpful:	01%	03/207
Not Helpful:	00%	00/207

Check your overall rating of the Writing Fellow with whom you worked.

Very Effective:	80%	165/207
Effective:	19%	40/207
Marginally Effective:	01%	02/207
Not Effective:	00%	00/207

Check your overall rating of the Writing Fellow Program.

Very Effective:	74%	154/207
Effective:	25%	50/207
Marginally Useful:	01%	03/207
Unsatisfactory	00%	00/207

Winter Semester: 1996

The Writing Center

Student Evaluation Questionnaire Statistics

The total number of respondents was 174. Percentages indicated as 1% may actually be less.

Why did you come to The Writing Center?

Course requirement:	61%	106/174
Needed help with specific assignment:	29%	51/174
To improve writing skills:	08%	14/174
Reputation of the Writing Center:(less than)	02%	03/174

How did you arrange your Writing Fellow conference?

Writing Fellow assigned to course:	47%	82/174
Made an appointment:	47%	82/174
Walk-in (no appointment):	06%	10/174

Was this your first conference with a Writing Fellow?

yes: 33% 57/174 no: 67% 117/174

Did you find it convenient to use the Writing Center?

yes: 99% 174/174 no: 01% 01/174

Did the Writing Fellow identify problems in your writing of which you were unaware?

yes: 96% 167/174 no: 04% 07/174

Was the Writing Fellow courteous and respectful?

yes: 99% 173/174 no: 01% 01/174

Do you think you will use the Writing Center again?

yes: 99% 172/174 no: 01% 02/174

How helpful were the written comments on your paper?

Very Helpful:	66%	114/174
Helpful:	31%	55/174
Marginally Helpful:	02%	04/174
Not Helpful:	01%	01/174

Winter Semester: 1996

The Writing Center

Student Evaluation Questionnaire Statistics

How helpful was your conference with a Writing Fellow?

Very Helpful:	71%	123/174
Helpful:	26%	45/174
Marginally Helpful:	03%	06/174
Not Helpful:	00%	00/174

Check your overall rating of the Writing Fellow with whom you worked.

Very Effective:	76%	133/174
Effective:	24%	41/174
Marginally Effective:	00%	00/174
Not Effective:	00%	00/174

Check your overall rating of the Writing Fellow Program.

Very Effective:	70%	121/174
Effective:	29%	51/174
Marginally Useful:	01%	02/174
Unsatisfactory	00%	00/174

Spring Semester: 1996

The Writing Center

Student Evaluation Questionnaire Statistics

The total number of respondents was 27. Percentages indicated as 1% may actually be less.

Why did you come to The Writing Center?

Course requirement:	37%	10/27
Needed help with specific assignment:	13%	13/27
To improve writing skills:	04%	04/27
Reputation of the Writing Center:(less than)	00%	00/27

How did you arrange your Writing Fellow conference?

Writing Fellow assigned to course:	33%	09/27
Made an appointment:	17%	17/27
Walk-in (no appointment):	04%	01/27

Was this your first conference with a Writing Fellow?

yes: 52% 14/27 no: 48% 13/27

Did you find it convenient to use the Writing Center?

yes: 89% 24/27 no: 11% 03/27

Did the Writing Fellow identify problems in your writing of which you were unaware?

yes: 96% 26/27 no: 04% 01/27

Was the Writing Fellow courteous and respectful?

yes: 100% 27/27 no: 00% 00/27

Do you think you will use the Writing Center again?

yes: 100% 27/27 no: 00% 00/27

How helpful were the written comments on your paper?

Very Helpful:	85%	23/27
Helpful:	11%	03/27
Marginally Helpful:	00%	00/27
Not Helpful:	04%	01/27

Spring Semester: 1996

The Writing Center

Student Evaluation Questionnaire Statistics

How helpful was your conference with a Writing Fellow?

Very Helpful:	81%	22/27
Helpful:	15%	04/27
Marginally Helpful:	04%	01/27
Not Helpful:	00%	00/27

Check your overall rating of the Writing Fellow with whom you worked.

Very Effective:	89%	24/27
Effective:	07%	02/27
Marginally Effective:	00%	00/27
Not Effective:	04%	01/27

Check your overall rating of the Writing Fellow Program.

Very Effective:	89%	24/27
Effective:	07%	02/27
Marginally Useful:	00%	00/27
Unsatisfactory:	04%	01/27

VIII. WAC Evaluation by Writing Fellows

Just as I did last year, I asked each Writing Fellow to evaluate the program and offer suggestions for improvement. I think this type of self-evaluation is important because it offers perspective from the core of the program. That is, the day-to-day experiences of working as a Writing Fellow offer an understanding of the program that I, as coordinator, cannot experience. As stated earlier, working as a peer tutor is a unique experience that those of us in a position of power over students cannot fully appreciate. Writing Fellows are able to talk to students on an level of equality, empathy, and sometime sympathy that we as faculty and administrators cannot. Writing Fellows also are the first to notice problems in the system or how to improve something that is working.

In addition, I asked the Writing Fellows to suggest means of improvement for the program. They offered several valuable suggestions for promoting the program and improving communications with faculty and students.

Has working as a Writing Fellow met your expectations? Explain.

"I expected it to be more than I could handle. It is hard work, but I enjoy it and I am capable of doing it."

"Yes. I anticipated working hard, meeting new people, clarifying my understanding of the writing process, gaining insight into how others write and discovering how well I could us my knowledge to assist others. I have met with each of these."

"Yes. I have found it to be a wonderful program that I am proud to be a part of."

"I really loved working with tutees--I just wish there were more of them."

"Working as a Writing Fellow has more than met my expectations. This time allows me to do something for someone else, giving me the opportunity to grow as a person."

"Working as a Writing Fellow has exceeded my expectations. I have learned more about the writing process through teaching it to others. I really feel good about myself when I've helped someone."

"Yes, and then some! My interaction with the tutees has given me new respect for the writing process."

In what area do you think the WAC program is most effective?
(e.g. high order problems, sentence errors, mechanics, building students' confidence)

"The WAC program most effectively helps students not to view writing as an exercise in grammar or as an isolating event, but rather as a way to communicate their ideas to others in a clear and concise manner."

"Showing students that going to the Writing Center doesn't mean they aren't intelligent, building student confidence by showing them how they can take control of their writing . . . and giving students a supportive understanding . . . to help them improve themselves."

"For me, I see an increase in student confidence. They see their papers differently after I conference with them."

"My experience with students has been seeing a noticeable sign of confidence after openly discussing an assignment or particular problem with someone."

What type of student do you think is helped most by the program?
(e.g. remedial, average, advanced, procrastinators, good writers, bad writers, all of the above)

"Any student who is interested in his or her own writing . . . . This encompasses all levels and types of writers."

"I think all students are assisted in some way, although it may feel as though WFs make major breakthroughs with remedial or average students."

"I feel that average students are helped most because they have a better understanding of the writing process and seem to be open to suggestions . . . ."

"I think all writing, regardless how poorly or well written can always be improved by experiencing it with someone."

"Everyone is at a different level, so a Writing Fellow can help whomever they are working with. Sometime WFs teach skills, sometimes encouraging the students to keep trying is the goal."

"No matter the skill level, the important factor is the desire of the student to improve."

What purpose does the WAC program best serve?
(e.g. helping students in fellowed classes, helping all students, translating teacher language into student language, lowering anxiety of students, providing editing services, etc.)

"The WAC program best helps students understand what the professor is expecting from the paper and what exactly is proper college writing."

"I think lowering student anxiety is a key factor in bringing people back to the Writing Center. Someone who finds a support system by meeting with a Writing Fellow will continue using our services regardless if they are made to do so by a professor."

"The WAC program best serves fellowed classes, translating teacher language into student language and lowering anxiety levels."

"Helping students realize that writing is best when we follow the writing process eases some of the tension caused by trying to write the perfect paper."

"The fellowed classes are wonderful for setting and keeping those deadlines–procrastination is reduced."

"Some students just need a few ideas to get them on the right track. Some students are desperately searching for someone who understands how difficult writing can be."

"I think the WAC program serves the fellowed classes best–the benefits of a conference with a Writing Fellow becomes evident."

Should this program continue at MCCC? Why or why not?

"Yes. Students need somewhere they can go for help with papers."

"A resounding yes! Students may not ask a professor questions about writing that they feel free to ask Writing Fellows. Even Writing Fellows use the Writing Center–proof that it works."

"Yes. The program helps both the students and the instructors through improvement of students' writing abilities."

"WAC at MCCC is performing a great service to the students. . . . I wish I had come to the Writing Center when I took English 151."

"Yes it should continue because it benefits the students. The Writing Fellows program helps students realize what writing involves–something that is very important after they leave MCCC."

"Definitely! With the continued emphasis on writing across the curriculum how can it be discontinued? It's need will only increase."

"I have seen that students, after one appointment, have more skills and confidence which carries over into their future writing."

If you had the authority, what one thing about the WAC program or Writing Center would you change, add, or eliminate?

"The mind set that only poor writers go to Writing Fellows."

What do you see as the most frequent reason students come to the Writing Center?
(e.g. develop ideas, start an assignment, organize, work on structure, grammar & spell check)

"Most frequently to get an understanding of the assignment."

"Organization! Most students want to know if what they have written makes sense."

"Because it's a class requirement. However, often the conference becomes much more than just another requirement. Students are drawn into their papers and begin to understand their writing."

What is your impression of the physical environment of the Writing Center; and given the fact that we are housed in the LAL, what improvements could we make?

"My first suggestion to improve the physical appearance would be to replace the doors and blinds."

"The tutees are crowded into a small area. Otherwise it seems to be a good area to work."

"The round tables are wonderful and make the tutoring session more relaxing."

"I wish it were quieter. It's hard to be confidential when you must raise your voice to be heard."

"I notice some concern with the lack of privacy. My suggestion is to use cubicles to allow more privacy."

How do you feel about the working relationship you have with the instructor of your fellowed class?
(is it positive/negative; would you change the process, or want more or less contact?)

"I had and continue to have positive working relationships with my fellowed class instructors. They have allowed me to meet the class, explain the program, pass out flyers, schedule appointments, and stop in occasionally to see if anyone needs additional help."

"Positive. He explains what he expects and give me an assignment sheet to refer to. I feel comfortable speaking with him and he has been more than helpful."

"The instructor said he saw a big improvement in his students' writing after agreeing to work with a Writing Fellow."

"He wanted me to explain the assignment to them. I was not comfortable with this. He also neglected to hand out an assignment sheet--many of the students were very unclear about what the had to do."

"I feel that if you want a Writing Fellow for your class, you, as the instructor, need to make it mandatory and a draft due date needs to be established."

Would you be willing to put in more time (beyond your present workload) to learn about the technology of distance tutoring, computers, and the Internet? Why or why not?

"Yes. Computer technology is something I wish I understood and would like to learn about."

"Yes. Technology will increase the availability of Writing Center information. It can also be a direct way of encouraging written communication."

"The Internet is the future in communication and I'd be a fool not to invest my time into bettering myself for the future."

"I would be great to help those students who would probably not contact the Writing Center except through the Internet."

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"Yes. Any effort to improve communication with the students is extremely important."

"Yes. I am interested in the possibilities of distance-tutoring as compared with face-to-face tutoring."

Do you have any suggestions as to how we might increase the number of students who use the Writing Center or how we might make the Writing Center a less intimidating place to visit?

"A Writing Center open house and have all of the Comp I classes stop in. The first week of class would be a good time for this."

"I think we are doing a lot to enhance student participation: speaking to fellowed classes, passing out bookmarks and brochures, bulletin board in the Adm. building and maintaining a reputable business."

"Maybe hanging posters in frequented areas might help."

"Even if teachers don't request it, ask for some time to send a Writing Fellow to each class."

"The instructors should offer extra credit points or require students to see a Writing Fellow."

"Change the way the LAL is described in the schedule books. When I first read about the LAL there, I thought this must be a place where those illiterate people who can't read or write go to relearn what they couldn't learn earlier."

"More advertisement!"

"Teachers encouraging students to come by offering extra credit points. While it is a bribe, it surely ends in gain for the students."

"Have a Writing Fellow visit at least one class each semester."

"Student newspaper or posters around campus."

"Form a staff of Writing Fellows to advertise. Maybe send the group to classes on the first day to talk about the LAL and the writing program."

"Advertise. Have Writing Center sponsored activities: a writing workshop, t-shirts, etc."

"Publicize the Writing Center more. If instructors would tell their students how paper grades improved after visiting the Writing Center more students would want to go."

"A presentation to the new students at orientation."

IX. WAC Evaluation by Faculty

I did not give the faculty a program evaluation questionnaire this year; however, several made comments on the evaluation form they completed for their individual Writing Fellows. I have listed several of those comments about the program in general.

Statistically, 93% of the comments about individual Writing Fellows indicated that the Writing Fellow met the faculty expectations for work completed, punctuality, and thoroughness. In addition, 97% of those faculty who read more than one draft of each student's paper, indicated that the papers had improved in quality from first to final draft, and 95% of the faculty indicated that the Writing Fellow made faculty participation in the program easy (meaning the writing fellow did most of the work) or average (meaning the writing fellow and faculty shared the work load.) I think these are impressive statistics, and they reflect the quality and the professionalism of the Writing Fellows.

In 1996-1997 we will extensively survey the entire faculty using a similar format that Dr. John Holladay used when he initiated the program. We will compare data to look at attitude changes, frequency of use, reasons for using the program, and specific impressions of WAC. This should allow us to gauge whether or not any real progress has occurred.

(Faculty Comments)

The students papers have increased in quality

The Writing Fellow had many favorable comments from my students. Writing Fellows for evening classes should have evening office hours.

The Writing Fellow was very enthusiastic and concerned that she understood what I was looking for in the assignments.

The Writing Fellow went out of her way to accommodate the students in this class and spent a good amount of time with each one.

First time I used a Writing Fellow. I will definitely use on again Thanks!

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Rachel Krug writes down a suggestion from Writing Fellow Cheryl Bunker

Language For Learning News

Vol. 8, No. 1, October 1995
Editor: Timothy J. Dillon
Newsletter of the Monroe County Community College Writing Program

Writing Fellow Program 1995-96

Note from the Editor

The Writing Fellow program began 1995-96 with 15 new Writing Fellows joining 14 returning Senior Writing Fellows. The doors opened for business on September 18, and our statistics indicate we are busier this year than at the same time last year. I credit this to the support of the faculty in helping us get the word out about our services and to the quality service we provide.

The success stories in the Writing Center are too numerous to mention, but let me offer a few comments from students who have visited the Writing Center in the last year. One student said, "Conferencing with the Writing Fellow brings small points of possible improvement to my attention that I would have otherwise overlooked." Another said "I think more professors should use the Writing Fellow program because I think the professors would be handed well-written papers, not junk." And last, "I think this is a great idea! I probably would not have known about it had it not been course required." These are just a few of the hundreds of similar comments students have submitted.

"I think this is a great idea! I probably would not have known about it had it not been course required."

I think you see from these comments that the Writing Center is appreciated by students.

On another note, I have mixed emotions about this semester because I wasn't able to provide Writing Fellows for everyone who requested

(continued on page 6, see WF Program)

WAC Coordinator and Writing Fellows Attend Writing Center Conference!

On October 10, Writing Fellows Carol Sliwka and Cheryl Bunker joined me in attending the "Second Annual Michigan Writing Centers Ideas Exchange Conference." The agenda included several interesting group discussions on the problems facing writing centers and WAC programs statewide: how to start and organize a WAC program, gaining faculty support, financing a writing center, and defining the role of a writing center. I joined in the discussion of the first mentioned group, and I was pleasantly surprised to learn that we have one of the best programs in Michigan. Our program seems to a have a clear purpose and direction, and meets the needs of all students--many of the program at other schools are tied to remediation.

Part of my conclusion about our program's quality is based on interest other Writing Center Directors have in our program. Several asked me for more information, and two Directors plan to visit our

(see Conference p. 2)

Conference

(cont. from page 1)

campus to see WAC in action.

In the afternoon, the group divided into administrators and tutors. The program administrators revised the "Proposed Constitution of the Michigan Writing Centers Association," while the tutors discussed best-practice tutoring skills. Below are articles written by Carol Sliwka and Cheryl Bunker on their reaction to the conference.

Tim Dillon

The most significant information gained from the Writing Conference at UM-Flint is that, of all the schools attending, the writing program here at MCCC is the most organized and utilized program. Most of the other institutions have their writing tutors working primarily with the remedial English classes. Rather than examining a specific paper, they tutor the entire writing process. Assignments are given to these remedial students by the tutors, and generally they work with the same three or four students throughout the entire semester.

"Other tutors were amazed at and envious of the amount of faculty support the Writing Fellows have at MCCC."

After a brief introduction, the fifty or so tutors, faculty, and administrators broke into small groups to discuss various topics. In my "Tutor Training" group, I learned that at Western Michigan University, writing tutors are given a whole two hours worth of tutoring instruction before they are let loose in the Writing Center. At Michigan State, students attend a class similar to our Advanced Composition, and at semester end, they are eligible--but not guaranteed--to be a tutor.

All of the schools place great emphasis on required monthly meetings for the tutors. Tutors who do not attend are fired.

Other tutors there were amazed at and envious of the amount of faculty support the Writing Fellows have at MCCC.

I am convinced that the program here at MCCC is head and shoulders above the rest, even though they all have bigger budgets.

Carol Sliwka

(cont. on p. 6. See Conference)

Tutor Training

In this issue of Language for Learning I would like to share with you the best-practice tutoring our Writing Fellows perform. We have a very successful program that I credit to two things. The first is the format that Dr. John Holladay put in place seven years ago when he developed this program--modeled on a study at Brown University. In comparison to programs around the state, I can say that our program is certainly one of the best, and probably operates as, or more, effectively than any other program. The second element of success is based on the tutoring philosophy and training our Writing Fellows learn in 254 Composition. I would like to address the second element in this issue.

The training each of our Writing Fellows receives is based on our program philosophy as outlined in MCCC's "Writing Fellows Mission Statement." Our goals are to help all students become better writers, and to help all MCCC faculty become better teachers by providing a support service and individualized writing instruction to their students. We also believe that the best way for students to learn to write is by writing and rewriting, and engaging in dialogue with interested peers about their writing.

In addition, we follow several important principles: we begin working with the student's writing at the stage of the process the student is at, we always allow the student to do the work--we resist temptation to fix the paper, and we deal with "high order" concerns--thesis, organization, and development--before "low order" concerns--spelling and punctuation.

We believe that writers are better able to work through the process of writing when they have a caring, knowledgeable audience in a non-threatening environment. As their confidence

increases, they are more eager to write, they write more, and thus become better writers.

Having said all of that, I want to give you some idea of what goes on in a writing conference. While no two conferences develop in the same way, it is possible to show you what a typical session might look like.

The opening of a tutorial is time to get acquainted--the WF attempts to establish a rapport with the student. They might discuss general or particular writing problems the student is experiencing. Questions the WF might ask include: do you have an assignment sheet, have you been to the Writing Center before, or when is the writing assignment due?

The next step is to set an agenda, such as working on specific problems, identifying a tutoring time frame, or establishing goals.

At this point, the WF determines the stage of the writing process the student has reached. If, for example, the student is struggling with developing ideas, the WF may demonstrate several brainstorming strategies such as "freewriting, listing, cubing, journalistic questions, or developing a topic tree." The WF might also suggest several organizing principles for the student to follow such as: analysis, comparison and contrast, or formal definition.

If the student has a draft of the writing project, the WF will probe several areas of concern. The WF might ask the student to identify his or her thesis, point out topic sentences for each paragraph, orally summarize the main point of the paper, or explain what he or she is trying to do in this piece of writing. It is also at this stage that the WF will probably have the student read his or her paper aloud so he or she can hear awkward sentences, missing words, or sentence fragments.

During the session, the WF will explore other areas of "high order" concern. The WF may ask the student to evaluate his or her own writing, find weaknesses in the writing, identify parts of the paper the student struggled with the most, or parts the student found easiest to write. The WF may also discuss points of information that the student may have left out, and provide the student with a "descriptive" reaction to the success or failure of the student's work.

I think you can see, by the types of questions asked and the approach the WF takes, that the strategies employed are designed to help the student learn for herself or himself.

After the "high-order" concerns have been addressed, the WF and student may look at other areas such as grammar, punctuation, or spelling. These things are looked at last, not because they are not important, but because they are the finishing touches on a piece of work. If we were building an automobile, we would be concerned with the engine and transmission first, and the paint job, chrome accents, and wheel covers last. The same is true for writing. Mechanics are important to any piece of writing in that they add to the presentation of a paper that is both content smart and visually pleasing. Without content, however, the student is putting chrome on a car that won't start or go anywhere.

The WF will demonstrate for the student several strategies for locating errors in spelling, punctuation, comma splicing, etc. One for example is to read the paper backwards, starting with the last word or sentence. This isolates the errors outside the reading context and allows the editor to quickly find them.

As the tutorial session ends, the WF might discuss several things with the student. Often the WF will have the student summarize the work they just completed, or the WF may evaluate the progress of the student and set an agenda for future sessions. In any case, the WF will try to end the session on a positive note with encouragement and praise for the student's ability to become a better writer.

Each of these sessions takes on its own characteristics, and the progress students make certainly varies from student to student. We are convinced, however, that students improve their writing and become better thinkers and problem solvers because they talk about their writing with supportive listeners. I hope you will incorporate more and more writing into your courses, and encourage your students to use the Writing Center. They will thank you.

Writing Center Hours
Fall & Winter

Monday-Thursday : 8:00 am - 7:00 PM

Friday: 8:00 am - 4:00 PM

Saturday: 9:00 am - 1:00 PM

29 Writing Fellows Assigned to Courses Across the Curriculum

The engine that makes our Writing Across the Curriculum program run is the assigning of Writing Fellows to individual courses. We do this for several reasons: instructors and students are able to work with one or two Writing Fellows who know the assignment well, and WF's become familiar with the students' work and recognize the problems that students typically have with specific writing assignments. Since Writing Fellows stay in close contact with the instructors, they are also able to anticipate problems that may occur with students working through the writing process, making appointments, and meeting paper deadlines.

In addition, the process we follow for a fellowed class (those classes assigned Writing Fellows) is somewhat different. In the fellowed class, the WF collects the papers from the instructor and takes them home to read and comment upon before meeting with the student. This has a distinct advantage in that the WF does not have to use conferencing time to read the paper. Both the WF and the tutee can discuss the paper from a point of knowledge and familiarity.

I also think that one of the best elements of our program is the built-in contact between the Writing Fellows and the faculty. Students rarely get to work with faculty other than in a student/teacher model. The faculty/tutor model provides a unique opportunity for students and faculty to interact in a cooperative effort to help students improve their thinking and writing skills.

Below are the Faculty/Writing Fellow assignments for Fall 1995:

Instructor	Course		Enrollment	Writing Fellow
John Holladay	Philosophy	151-01	24	Christina Vandevelde
	Philosophy	152-01	26	Christina Iacobellis Carol Sliwka
	English	252-02	22	Tara Pogarch
Robert Merkel	English	256-01	21	Janine Sitch
Lawrence Leach	Philosophy	253-01	22	Michael Taylor
	Philosophy	152-51	22	Tricia Spitulski
Michael Mohn	Mech	101-01	24	Evelyn Nofziger
	Mech.	101-02	25	George Rhodes Evelyn Nofziger Tina Waterstradt Janine Sitch
	Mech.	102-01	17	Marge Eastman
Margaret Bacarella	Political Sci	151-04	35	Allyson Motylinski Elizabeth DuMoulin
	Political Sci	151-11	34	Kathy Leonhardt George Rhodes

Instructor	Course		Enrollment	Writing Fellow
James Devries	Anthropology	152-01	28	Diana Agy Denise Labardee
	History	153-01	18	Cheryl Bunker
Robert Tarrant	Accounting	251-01	21	Tammy Hartung
	Accounting	251-51	15	Sue Cairl
B. J. Harmon	Mathematics	157-01	30	Allison Taylor Nichole Nemec
	Mathematics	157-02	36	Tina Waterstradt Armand LaRochelle
	Mathematics	164-01	34	Jennifer Hasley Tracy Boudrie
Terry Telfer	English	251-51	11	Carol Sliwka
Barbara Long	Physical Sci.	151-01	12	Kathy Hammond
Wendy Wysocki	Business Mgt.	101-01	29	Carrie Nartker Kelly Doty
Ann Marie Snider	Psychology	151-12	31	Julie Montri Lisa Pierce

The Fall Semester 1995 Advanced Composition Class
(Writing Fellows in Training)

Front Row (left to right) Tracy Boudrie, Jennifer Hasley, Christina Iacobellis, Lisa Pierce, George Rhodes, Marge Eastman
Back Row (left to right) Tim Dillon, Tricia Spituiski, Julie Montri, Allyson Motlyinski, Elizabeth Dumoulin, Michael Taylor, Kelly Doty, Christina Vandevelde, Janine Sitch, Eveyln Nofziger

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WAC/Writing Center Extension Center News!

I am sorry to say that we do not have a Writing Fellow at the Jefferson Center this semester, and that we have only one Writing Fellow assigned to a regular schedule at Whitman this semester. Sue Cairl is working there on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM.

In addition, Tricia Spitulski is working with Dr. Leach in his Philosophy 152, and Carol Sliwka is fellowing Dr. Telfer's Poetry and Drama course at the Whitman Center.

The reason we do not have more WF's at the Extension Centers is that according to statistics from last year, the WF's assigned to Whitman were operating at a much smaller student-conference ratio than those on the Main campus. If we have more instructors at Whitman requesting Writing Fellows for Winter Semester, I will look again at placing additional WF's at Whitman extension. Until then, however, I encourage all Whitman and Jefferson instructors to tell your students about our services on Main campus.

Conference

(cont. from page 1)

After arriving at the UM-Flint campus, we walked the skywalk to the seminar which was to be held in their WC (Writing Center). Their room typified our LAL with its desks, tables, and bookcases; however, unlike our LAL, photographs and posters plastered their walls, and the room solely housed the WC.

Since the seminar drew a greater than expected response, the meeting moved downstairs to the Happenings room. After introductions and a presentation on the history of UM-Flint's Writing Center, we divided into various groups for discussion on effective training practices and tutoring programs. Represented in my group were UM-Flint, Grand Valley State, and Lansing CC, and our discussion focused on the advantages and disadvantages of an integrated remedial-writing program versus two separate programs. UM-Flint has an integrated system with a computer lab and a three-level developmental English program aided by Writing Center tutors. Along with individual tutoring, Grand Valley State's Writing Center tutors conduct small group sessions with remedial English students. Both schools assist other students with assignments, but by appointment only. Lansing CC has only instructors and no peer tutors in their WC.

In the afternoon, Carol and I met with other peer tutors to exchange ideas and stories. The group discussion revolved around how and why each of us became a writing tutor. The session also addressed program structures. Some schools have a nomination process similar to ours, and others have an application process. Tutor training varies in depth. A few schools require a full semester of advanced English with intensive tutor training similar to ours, but most schools have varying levels of tutor training ranging from a few weeks to a two-hour seminar. Required tutoring hours range from two to seven hours per week.

Missing from both discussions was the issue of support, or rather the lack of it, from faculty. Many seminar attendees expressed amazement at our fellowed classes, our mentor system, and the support given by our instructors. Having our WAC program separate from remedial tutoring services provides for student accessibility, increased usage, and success; and I believe this makes it the better system.

Cheryl Bunker

WF Program

(cont. from page 1)

them. While we had requests for WF's for 28 courses, we could only fellow 22 courses.

On the positive side, this must mean that the program is doing well; however, on the negative side it also means that as many as 150 students might not be using our valuable service.

I encourage everyone who requested a WF and did not get one, and everyone who has just been thinking about using the Writing Center, to tell your students to make an appointment at the Writing Center for their next writing assignment. We have 29 Writing Fellows, who work two hours a week, anxiously awaiting their arrival. Your students will thank you.

Please photo copy the WC Schedule on page 7 and pass it out to your students.

Writing Center Schedule: Fall 1995

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8 -9		Kathy Hammond		Kathy Hammond	Allison Taylor	
9-10	Nichole Nemec	Denise Labardee	Nichole Nemec	Denise Labardee	Carrie Nartker Allison Taylor	Christina Vandevelde
10-11	Evelyn Nofziger	Julie Montri Jennifer Hasley	Tracy Boudrie	Julie Montri Jennifer Hasley	Tracy Boudrie Evelyn Nofziger	Marge Eastman
11-12	Tara Pogarch Lisa Pierce		Tara Pogarch Carrie Nartker			Marge Eastman
12-1	Cheryl Bunker Christina Iacobellis	Tina Waterstradt Elizabeth DuMoulin		Elizabeth DuMoulin	Cheryl Bunker Christina Iacobellis	
1-2	Armand LaRochelle	Diana Agy Tina Waterstradt	Kathy Leonhardt	Diana Agy		
2-3	Armand LaRochelle	Carol Sliwka	Kathy Leonhardt	George Rhodes	George Rhodes	
3-4		Carol Sliwka	Kelly Doty	Allyson Motylinski		
4-5	Tammy Hartung Tricia Spitulski	Mike Taylor	Kelly Doty			
5-6	Tammy Hartung Tricia Spitulski	Allyson Motylinski Mike Taylor	Lisa Pierce			
6-7	Christina Vandevelde Janine Sitch		Janine Sitch			

Whitman: Sue Cairl Tue/Thurs 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Please make as many copies of this page as you like, and use this form and coupon to refer your students to the Writing Center. Your students will thank you.

Writing Center Referral Form
Monroe County Community College

Date: _____

Instructor: (Please attach this form to the student's assignment, if appropriate.)

I am referring _____ to the Writing Center for assistance with the following writing assignment:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Coupon

ABSOLUTELY FREE!

Act now and you get

10 Hot Tips for Developing Ideas

In addition, if you bring in a first draft of your paper you get

5 additional Hot Tips for Revising your paper

And as a special bonus this semester, if you make a follow-up appointment you get

3 Well Kept Secrets about quick ways to find Spelling and Punctuation errors.

Don't Wait, Don't Hesitate, Come to the Writing Center Today

(We are located in the LAL, on the second floor of the Campbell Learning Resources Center)

Please bring this coupon with you to the Writing Center.

Limit one coupon per student.

Offer expires December 21, 1995.

Language For Learning News

Vol. 8, No. 2, March 1996
Editor: Timothy J. Dillon
Newsletter of the Monroe County Community College Writing Program

From the Editor. . .

The Writing Fellows and I are delighted that business has been flourishing in the Writing Center for both Fall and Winter semesters. As a brief note (see statistics article on page 8 for more information) we increased the number of tutoring sessions by 150 conferences over fall of 1994, and we are on a steady pace to do the same for winter.

We have 13 new Writing Fellows training in Advanced Composition, and we have 21 returning Senior Writing Fellows. They are working with 15 instructors this semester on 23 sections. This keeps everyone busy, but we can always make room for more.

Two Writing Fellows and I recently attended the East Central Writing Centers Association conference in East Lansing and we discovered some very interesting concepts that may redefine writing centers. If you're interested in finding out about MOO, MUD, and OWL's (note this is not barnyard humor) read the article by Cheryl Bunker on the future of Writing Centers. In addition, Writing Fellow Carrie Nartker has written an article describing her conference experience that led to a particular insight into best-practice tutoring.

And last, I have an article aimed at ideas for "writing assignments" in your courses. I will discuss strategies and offer guidelines for constructing practical and useful writing assignments.

In this issue we also have a statistical profile of the Fall Semester in the Writing Center (page 6&7), and a photograph of the new Writing Fellows (page 7).

I hope you enjoy this issue of our newsletter, and as always, we are open to suggestions, ideas, criticism, or anything else on your mind about writing.

...WHAT'S INSIDE...

Gopher, OWL, WEB, MOO, and MUD

by Cheryl Bunker

From One Writing Fellow to Another

by Carrie Nartker

Fall Semester Statistics: A Profile

&

Writing to Learn Strategies (a review of writing assignments)

by Tim Dillon

East Central Writing Centers Association

On March 1-2, two Writing Fellows, Carrie Nartker and Cheryl Bunker, accompanied me to a conference that focused on several issues concerning writing centers and the services they provide. (cont. p. 2)

While the focus of the conference was on the use of technology in writing centers, there were several other topics addressed, including: the budgeting of writing centers, survival of writing centers, best-practice tutoring, and overcoming writing center insecurity.

The keynote address and capstone address were presented by Cynthia Selfe of Michigan Technological University and Peter Carino of Indiana University respectively. Ms. Selfe discussed the technological revolution occurring in writing centers and writing-across-the-curriculum programs. She noted that the technology we use will not necessarily be good; the quality and direction of service is still in the control of the people using the technology. As has always been true, we can use technology to improve our situation collaboratively, or we can use it to control other people. Ms. Selfe gave several examples of the misuse of the Internet focusing on the central theme of using the Internet to look at the rest of the world like a sub-species to be examined and analyzed. As an alternative she suggested we use the Internet to make cross-cultural connections and work toward a global community.

Mr. Carino discussed the nervousness of writing center directors and staff about how their work is perceived in the academic community. He noted that no other discipline or administration at this level has to continually prove itself to gain acceptance and recognition. Mr. Carino selected advertising examples from brochures from several writing centers in the midwest. He focused on the often self-deprecating language in these brochures. Many of them sound almost apologetic for even suggesting that this is a valuable program. Carino suggested that directors quit spending time apologizing for their programs and focus more on successful goals.

The focal point of the conference was the technology available to writing centers and how writing centers as we know them are changing because of this technology. The consensus was that we will continue to have face to face conferences in the writing center, but we must also be ready for "distance tutoring," "on-line access to documents," and setting up and using OWL's, and WEB SITES. As a techno-freak, I personally found this information to be exciting. On the other hand, my excitement was dampened when I realized we are several years behind other universities and colleges. Most of them have the technology in place and are now working out the bugs. On the plus side, however, these people are willing to help the few of us who are not on-line in the Internet age.

The future for writing centers may be things like MOO's--a virtual world available for people to meet in cyberspace and hold synchronous text-based discussions. There will also be OWL's, on line writing labs, and Web sites--which are cyberspace versions of writing centers complete with help files, resources, writing document, journals, and databases. If you want to know more, read Cheryl Bunker's article below.

All of us found the conference to be helpful in finding ways to redefine writing centers as they move toward fifty years of existence on college campuses in the United States. Carrie and Cheryl discovered new approaches to tutoring, and found affirmation of the approaches we already use. The conference confirmed for me that what we do in writing centers is still as important as ever, but that we must also find new ways to package our services, new ways to conference with students, and new ways to use the technology. As we move toward the next century, writing centers must find a way to meet the demands of students in twenty-first century terms.

Gopher, OWL, WEB, MOO, and MUD

by Cheryl Bunker

To the general population the terms Gopher, OWL, Web, MOO, and MUD may conjure up images of country living or George Orwell's Animal Farm. But, in a room of progressive writing center staffers, these terms mean computer technologies--and one is not equal to another.

During discussions with other collegiate representatives, I learned the role computers play in peer tutoring sessions. Most of the other writing centers have on-site computers; and in some centers, tutors assist students as they write their drafts. Stuart Blythe, of Purdue University, held a session titled, " 'But What If I Want to Doodle?' Assessing Tutorial Resources in Cyberspace," which focused on the computer as an on-line tutorial tool.

Purdue University developed a new and practical application of computer-based tutorials called OWL--On-line Writing Laboratory. OWL provides students with strategies for writing business and research

papers, and guidelines for documentation, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. Students can access OWL through E-mail, an Internet Gopher server, or on the World Wide Web Internet--a.k.a. Web.

The advantages of OWL include greater accessibility and convenience. Many students can gain immediate access to information when a personal consultation with a tutor would conflict with their schedules or when the Purdue Writing Laboratory is closed.

Stuart Blythe considers the inability to draw cluster, spider maps, or frames while discussing a paper with a student a disadvantage to OWL. Ideally, the on-line tutorial would resemble an actual visit to a writing center.

Near the end of the session, Mr. Blythe mentioned, however, that recent computer technologies allow separate boxes for a student's work, a tutor's revision notes, and a running dialogue. One such technology, MOO--Multiuse Object Oriented--developed from a unique combination of Internet Gopher servers and a fantasy game called MUD--multi-user dungeons.

So, in the not too distant future, tutors may have dual stations--one in a writing center and one in a virtual room.

From One Writing Fellow to Another: A Key Ingredient in the Successful Tutoring Session

by Carrie Nartker

I attended a session at the East Central Writing Centers Association Conference that addressed current issues in tutoring. This session was specifically for Writing Fellows. In this "Think Tank" as the session was titled, we explored issues that Writing Fellows must face while working in a writing center. From my interaction in a role-play, I was able to focus on an important aspect of tutoring.

The mock-tutoring session began with the session leaders performing small skits as they took turns being the "difficult" tutee. They acted out scenarios in which the students didn't have the assignments done, and weren't exactly sure what the assignments were. Nothing too new there. They then gave suggestions for managing similar situations--mostly things we (MCCC Writing Fellows) had already learned in Advanced Composition before we ever started working in the Writing Center.

Then the session took on a twist. The assignment was for everyone to pair off and hold their own tutorial session. I looked around curiously to see who my partner would be when a rush of air came over me as he plopped down in the chair next to mine. "Hi, I'm Jose" he said with a genuine smile. "Hi, I'm Carrie" I replied meekly in return. There we were, 400 lbs of Writing Fellows--I weigh 100 lbs. I saw others turn around to look at us, a seemingly odd couple, and snicker to themselves.

Our session leader quieted the group down. "OK," he announced. "The situation is this: one of you is the tutor and one of you is the tutee. The tutee is working on a Philosophy paper that deals with adultery. In the paper, the tutee has to give two pros and two cons of adultery and then argue whichever side he or she believes is right. You have twenty-five minutes." Jose and I looked at each other. We decided I was the tutee.

"I have two pros for adultery, but I can't think of any cons. I know my stand is for adultery, but I have to have two cons. What can I do?" As Jose posed scenarios where adultery could possibly have negative effects, and I refuted each possibility, I realized something crucial to our session. No matter how many of his suggestions I shot down, no matter how obstinate I became, Jose never once responded to me in a judgmental manner. I was never made to feel as though he were looking down on me or like I was some cheap floozy who couldn't spell monogamous, let alone practice it.

Throughout the session I remained firm in my stance on adultery. Jose, however, refused to give up on me. Although I didn't realize it at the time, throughout our conversation Jose was stirring ideas up that I would later put down as possible cons for adultery.

Near the end of the session, we reconvened to talk about some of the things we picked up during our session. Most everyone was talking about how difficult it was to come up with pros for adultery and the embarrassment they felt talking about this delicate subject.

Jose just looked at me and grinned. When it was our turn, I told the group how important it was to be open-minded and non-judgmental with our tutees. Establishing a good rapport with tutees and making them feel comfortable talking with us can make all the difference between a good session and a great session.

After the session was over, I thanked Jose for an inspiring "conference." He laughed and said he learned a lot from it too. I sat down in a chair to wait for my next session, which was also in the same room, when I noticed Jose still sitting in his seat. "Are you staying in here for the next session?" I asked him casually. "Yes." he replied. "So do you mind if I sit by you?" "Not at all."
And so I sat by him. The odd couple. Not so odd after all.

Writing Across the Curriculum: A Few Ideas and Strategies for the Classroom

by Tim Dillon

How significant is writing in your life? Although you may not have thought about it, you probably use writing much more than you realize. You may write memos to communicate with colleagues, you may take notes on books and articles you have read, you may jot down ideas for an instruction plan, you may put together a syllabus, you may keep a journal, you may write letters, you may make reminder lists, and you may write to clarify your thoughts. Okay, you say, I do most of these, but what does that have to do with writing in the classroom? The common thread that runs through all of these writing activities is that none of them will likely be evaluated by someone in a position of power. Does that mean that this type of writing is not valuable? Just the opposite; it is not only valuable, it may be the most valuable type of writing because it is writing that you do to organize the world you live in, make sense of the work you do, and communicate with the people in your work environment.

Yet, as soon as we think about the courses we teach, we immediately fall into the habits of assuming that all writing must be evaluated, that all writing must be a project or a culmination of the course, or that all writing must be a formal presentation of ideas. While all of those things are valid--and I encourage you to use them--please do not ignore the power of writing in developing thoughts and ideas, in contributing to clarity of thinking, and in reflecting the process of learning. Margot K. Soven in Write to Learn suggests that, "writing is important as a tool for learning, an aid to clarify thinking, as well as a vital communication skill, and . . . that all teachers, not just language arts or English department faculty, should share the responsibility of helping students realize that writing is not just a necessary skill in college and an advantageous skill in work, but that we write to organize our lives, necessary functions of living in societies" (1).

Years of research strongly indicate that the act of writing increases comprehension and improves understanding of the overall subject. Writing is also an active process, and the act of writing encourages us to focus and make knowledge personal. In addition, writing also develops thinking patterns and provides feedback for you, the instructor, about what students have learned.

Why then is writing often ignored as a tool for learning? I think that many of us model our own teaching after the teaching we experienced--in fact research suggests this is true. Since many of us were not exposed to writing as a learning tool in our own education--it fell from grace during the 60s, 70s, and 80s--we have carried the non-writing tradition into our own classrooms. With this assumption in mind, I would like to review a few principles suggested by Soven for constructing writing assignments.

Soven states, "A good writing assignment is related to the learning objectives of the course, is clearly presented, and is manageable for both student and teacher" (4). How does that translate into the practical construction of an assignment? Here are six suggestions that Soven offers--with my added comments--that I have found to be helpful in my courses.

1. Relate each assignment to the course objectives: an assignment can increase understanding of information, relationships among ideas, and terminology.
2. Construct assignments that require original thinking about significant issues: remember that original ideas may be new to the student although they are not new to you.
3. Specify a purpose and audience: make the assignment for some purpose other than earning a grade, and identify a specific audience. For example, an assignment that asks a student to explain photosynthesis to a group of high school students sets up a context with purpose and audience built in.
4. Specify the format of the paper: a common complaint from the Writing Fellows is that students do not have assignment sheets. In introductory courses, students need

specific formats to follow and requirements on length. This will benefit you also because you don't have to spend time figuring out what the student was trying to do or explaining why the paper doesn't meet some imaginary requirements.

5. Specify evaluation criteria: this will save you time when you are grading papers, and your students will better understand the objectives of the assignment.
6. Leave room for student choice: for new students provide them with a choice of three or four assignments; for advanced students you may want to leave the topic up to them.

If you follow these suggestions, I think you will have solidly constructed assignments that are clear and accessible to all your students.

While the above criteria works well for all writing assignments, there are more specific types of assignments that you may want to explore. One of these is "writing for discovery." This type of assignment is aimed at helping students learn course material or new information. This type of assignment is rarely graded and is generally informal.

Because students sometimes complain about completing work that is not graded, some instructors give checks or minimal points for completion. The other way to deal with this, however, is to explain early on that some writing--especially in-class writing--is used as a study tool only, it is not for evaluation. Most students understand this if the rules are clear from the beginning. Another way to encourage students to complete unevaluated writing is to make it part of group work; peer pressure comes into play and you can easily spot those students who are unprepared for group discussions.

Discovery writing can take on many forms: journals, in-class notes, freewriting, research logs, etc. In each case, the goal of discovery writing is to create an active learning situation in which students take abstract theories and ideas and make them concrete and personal. The results are that students know the material better, students are better prepared for class discussion--they have something written down in front of them--and students feel more confident about their work. These are all plusses for you as well as the students.

I often hear comments from faculty about how they would do anything to get their students more involved in the learning process. Well, here is your "anything."

"Writing to learn" strategies work. The research indicates they work, I have spoken to numerous instructors who tell me they work, and from personal experience I know they work. So when you are putting together that syllabus for next semester, why not put in at least one academic writing assignment--research paper, article review, etc.--and at least two "writing to discover" assignments--journals, in-class writing, etc. And let me know how it works out.

Work Cited

Soven, Margot K. Write to Learn: A Guide to Writing Across the Curriculum. Cincinnati: South-Western, 1996.

Fall Semester Statistics: A Profile

While I am sure most of you are aware that the Writing Center exists, I think many of you aren't real clear about what goes on there. In the fall issue I discussed tutor training and what students and tutors do in a writing conference. In this issue, I would like to give you a statistical picture of a semester in the Writing Center. Some of the things you might look for on the statistics page (see page eight for statistical data) are the number of total conferences--we increased the number of conferences from 784 to 934 from Fall Semester of 1994 to 1995 in spite of the fact that enrollment was down.

Another statistic reflects the types of writing most frequently assigned. The 500 word theme, the research paper, and the book/article review are most popular. You can also see that Writing Fellows primarily work with high order writing problems: content, introductions and conclusions, thesis statements, and transition. A smaller number of students were helped with grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Last, is the statistical breakdown by department. The majority of writing conferences were for students in humanities courses: 766, second was Business with 72, followed by Science/Math 65, Industrial Technology 27, and Health Science 4. Obviously the number of faculty using the WAC program or Writing Center from outside Humanities is very small. I hope we can increase the number next year.

As I travel to conferences and meet with other WAC program directors and Writing Center staff, I am always asked to explain the details of our Writing Fellow program for two reasons: they find it unique and they have heard about its success. While we did not invent the program--it originated at Brown University--there are very few programs like it. I know of only two others in Michigan--Macomb CC and Schoolcraft CC--and these are modified versions of our program.

While other universities, colleges, and community colleges may have more elaborate writing centers, larger budgets, and more staff, I don't think any of them have more per capita business than our Writing Center. This is a tribute to the program and the dedication of the faculty and Writing Fellows who work in the program.

In addition, I believe that assigning students to specific courses, as we do every semester, increases the likelihood that students will use the Writing Center to become better writers. And as I have repeated ad nauseam, once students come to the Writing Center for the first time, they tend to become repeat customers.

So I think we at MCCC owe ourselves three cheers for contributing to and participating in a successful program in three ways: using Writing Fellows for our courses, nominating potential Writing Fellows, and providing general support for the program. I also offer my gratitude to those of you who consistently assign writing in your courses. You are helping your students become better thinkers and better students.

Below are the faculty participants and Writing Fellow assigned to their courses in Winter Semester, 1996.

Instructor	Course		Enrollment	Writing Fellow
John Holladay	Philosophy	151-01	25	Tara Pogarch Brian McDermott
	Philosophy	152-01	25	Julie Montri Steve Mullins
Robert Merkel	English	256-01	19	Lisa Pierce Christina Iacobellis
	Music	165-01	14	Cheryl Bunker
Lawrence Leach	Speech	151-03	9	Kathie Leonhardt
Michael Mohn	Mech.	101-01	24	Armand LaRochelle Angela Friedline
	Mech.	101-02	25	Andrew St. Pierre Melissa Russeau
	Welding	105-01	6	Lisa Smith
Marge Bacarella	Political Sci	151-02	30	Tina Waterstradt Jennifer Cooley
	Political Sci	252-01	15	Allison Taylor
James Devries	History	256-01	13	Diana Agy
Robert Tarrant	Accounting	254-01	16	Sarah Younglove

Instructor	Course		Enrollment	Writing Fellow
Robert Tarrant	Accounting	254-51	8	Evelyn Nofziger
B. J. Harmon	Mathematics	172-01	24	Tammy Hartung Nichole Nemec
Wendy Wysocki	Business Mgt.	101-01	29	Katrina Seguin Emily Woltman
Diane Vajcner	Psychology	151-12	11	Marge Eastman
Stan Davis	Sociology	252-01	25	Kathy Hammond George Rhodes
Cheryl McKay	Accounting	205-01	17	Tracy Boudrie
Dean Kerste	Engineering	152-01	29	Molly Lindsey
	Drafting	128-01	16	Jennifer Hasley
Bill McCloskey	English	260-02	11	Brenda Aniol
Robert Leske	Sociology	151-04	30	Carrie Nartker Alicia Ferris

The Winter Semester 1996 Advanced Composition Class
(Writing Fellows in Training)

Front Row (left to right) Trina Seguin, Sarah Younglove, Brenda Aniol, and Alicia Ferris.
Back Row (left to right) Steve Mullins, Tim Dillon, Ronnie Combs, Jennifer Cooley, Molly Lindsey, Melissa Russeau, Angela Friedline, Andrew St. Pierre, and Brian McDermott.

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The Writing Center: Fall Semester Statistical Data

Semester: Fall 1995	**Dates: from** September		**to** December				
No. of Writing Conferences:							
Main Campus	917			Appointment	384		
Whitman Campus	17			Fellowed Class	474		
Jefferson Center	0	**Total**	934	Walk-in	76		
Writing Assignment: 500 Word Theme		563	Research Paper	124	Creative Writing	6	
	Journal	39	Essay Test	28	Resume	0	
	Note Taking	2	Book Review	69	Lab Report	13	
	Outline	19	Paragraph	15	Other	14	
Type of Writing Assignment:	Narrative	27	Descriptive	59			
	Expository	267	Persuasive	176			
Method of Organization:	Chronological	3	Cause/Effect	0			
	Definition	53	Comp/Contrast	38			
	Division/Class	14	Analogy	45			
	Example	29	Other	8			
Stage of Writing Process:	Prewriting	107	Drafting	531			
	Revision	142	Editing	81			
	Final Product	44	Rewrite of Final	9			
WF Assisted with Content:	Subject	45	Thesis	139			
	Logic	35	Development	286			
	Audience	10	Other	7			
Organization	Intro/Conclusion	282	Body(paragraph)	97			
	Transitions	83	Format	179			
Grammar / Mechanics	Punctuation	113	Spelling	44			
	Grammar	86	Syntax	148			
	Diction	39	Other	5			
Department Represented:	Hum/Soc Science	766	Health Science	4			
	Business	72	Science/Math	65			
	Ind Tech	27					

". . . there are days when the result is so bad that no fewer than five revisions are required. In contrast, when I'm greatly inspired, only four revisions are needed." *John Kenneth Galbraith*

•WAC BULLETIN•

SEPTEMBER 25, 1995
Vol. 1. Issue 1. Editor Timothy Dillon

Welcome to our first WAC Bulletin. The purpose of this bulletin is communication; therefore, I hope this will become a place where we can all communicate with each other. Please use this opportunity to pass on important information, share experiences, and ask questions.

For the present we will have two columns: one for announcements and one for questions. If you have any announcements for other Writing Fellows, you may turn them in to me any time. I also invite you to submit questions about tutoring or other associated problems, and I will attempt to answer them thoroughly but succinctly in the following issues. In addition, if you have any suggestions for what we might put in this bulletin, please forward those to me as well.

As Shakespeare said, "Brevity is the soul of wit," so I will always try to keep this bulletin as uncluttered as possible. Thanks for taking time to read this, and I hope we will all have a great semester.

Announcements

Fellowed Courses

If the instructor for your fellowed class does not have the directions for the writing assignment prepared for you, please let me know in writing. Also indicate the expected date you will be able to turn in your written explanation of the assignment. Don't forget to turn in a copy to the instructor as well.

Mentor Program

If you have not contacted your Writing Fellow for the Mentor Program, please do so soon. I will be asking each of them next week about your discussion, so try to at least have a telephone conversation by Sept. 29. They are anxious to hear from you.

Senior Writing Fellow Meetings

Because your schedules are so diverse, regular meeting are almost impossible. I hope to have one meeting in late October that everyone can attend. (Perhaps we might even finagle food and refreshments as an incentive.) But anyway, I am hoping this bulletin can take the place of regular meetings. It will only work, however, with your cooperation and input.

LAL Bulletin Board and Other Stuff

Please read the announcements posted on the bulletin board in the LAL. I know some of you have not been doing this because you have not yet picked up your information packets on the Mentor Program. Because this bulletin is a bi-weekly publication, I will often put notes on the bulletin board for your immediate attention. Let me remind you that all communications to me go in my mailbox in the Humanities office or under my door. Do not put them in my LAL mailbox. It is for tutoring information only.

Question of the Week!

If I can't make it to my scheduled time in the Writing Center, what do I do?

As you all know, each of you is expected to be in the Writing Center during your scheduled hours each week. If you can't make it because of an emergency, please follow these procedures:

1. Call the LAL immediately to see if you have an appointment. If not, have the secretary cancel your time.

2. If you have an appointment, have the secretary ask an on-duty WF to cover for you. If none is available, call another WF or contact me.

3. You must always contact me about your missed time by calling me in my office (ext. 295), or at home. In every case I want to know the date and time you were not in the WC, and why you were not in the WC for your scheduled time.

Look for forms in the LAL to send messages to the WAC Bulletin. I hope to hear from you before the next publication.

•WAC BULLETIN•

OCTOBER 9, 1995
Vol. 1. Issue 2. Editor Timothy Dillon

Things seems to be running smoothly after three weeks in the Writing Center; however, here are a few things which might be of interest.

Cheryl Bunker, Carol Sliwka, and I are going to a conference at U of M Flint on 7 October 1995. We will have some type of conference description in the first newsletter--so watch for it.

I haven't received correspondence from you for this bulletin so I am assuming everything is just fine. However, I hope you will think of a few things we might discuss as if we were having weekly meetings. Jot them down and submit them for response.

On another note, you seem to be busy. I haven't done any stats, but I think we are ahead of last year's count--that's good news.

I could go on but I promised to be brief.

Announcements

Writing Fellow Vacancy

As you know from my note in your folder (assuming you looked in your folder), a Writing Fellow who had to leave the program was responsible for Mr. Mohn's MECH 101 course. I have already received return notes from two people offering to help meet this responsibility. I might still need someone else; so if you can help out, let me know very soon.

Pictures

Look at the display case in the Ad. Bldg. hallway (just before the cafeteria). I know you may be self-conscious about having your pictures on display, but I think it is important for everyone on campus to know who you are.

Reminders!

Please put any notes to me under my door or in my mailbox in the Humanities office. If a note is in with the conference forms (LAL), I may not see it for several days or more.

Be as thorough as possible when filling out the Writing Fellow Report. The categories on the sheet are meant to remind you about things you should explore with the tutee as much as providing documentation. Many of you need to question what type of writing assignment the tutee is working on: description, argument, compare and contrast, process, definition, etc.

Question of the Week!

Where do we begin when the student knows nothing about the "writing process"?

While we may feel comfortable with the steps of the writing process, many of the students who come to the Writing Center are not even aware of the process. They probably use what Peter Elbow calls "the dangerous method." That is, they write the paper in one draft--trying to get it right the first time.

First, we must assume the student has written only one draft because he or she doesn't know any better. Don't assume a lack of motivation. Second, be ready for the student's shock and dismay when you suggest a better, but more time consuming method.

As with most things, it is best to begin at the beginning. Give the student a hand-out on the stages of the writing process (they're on the filing cabinet) and talk about each stage, the advantages of working through the process, and the benefits the student will reap on the final product. You might, at this time, apply several prewriting techniques to the topic of the paper he or she is working on to show how the student could have developed more ideas or different strategies. Then discuss revision strategies and apply them to the paper in front of you. Last, discuss editing and encourage the student to make another appointment to work on this stage.

I think you will engage the student in the process of writing without sounding too dictator-like and without sounding too threatening. Try it, and let me know how it all works out.

The Writing Center

Student Evaluation Questionnaire

Students: Please help evaluate the Writing Center by answering the following questions.

Why did you come to the Writing Center? (please check only one answer)	
Course Requirement	____
Needed help with specific assignment	____
To improve my writing skills	____
Reputation of the Writing Center	____

How did you arrange your conference? (please check only one answer)	
Writing Fellow assigned to course	____
Made my own appointment	____
Walk-in (no appointment)	____

Was this your first conference with a Writing Fellow?	Yes ____	No ____
Did you find it convenient to use the Writing Center?	Yes ____	No ____
Did the Writing Fellow identify problems in your writing of which you were unaware?	Yes ____	No ____
Was the Writing Fellow courteous and professional?	Yes ____	No ____
Will you likely use the Writing Center again?	Yes ____	No ____

Please answer the questions below by circling the appropriate number

1 = Very Helpful 2 = Helpful 3 = Marginally Helpful 4 = Not Helpful

How helpful was the Writing Fellow Report (written comments about your paper)?

1 2 3 4

How helpful was your conference time with the Writing Fellow?

1 2 3 4

What is your overall evaluation of the Writing Fellow who helped you with your writing?

1 2 3 4

What is your overall evaluation of the Writing Center?

1 2 3 4

Please comment on your conference with the Writing Fellow or suggest improvements for our program.

_____

_____

_____

Writing Fellow Report

Name of Student: _____ Date Draft Received: _____

Writing Fellow: _____ Date Draft Returned: _____

Writing Assignment: (check one)

___ 500+ Word Theme	___ Essay Test	___ Paragraph
___ Book or Article Review	___ Journal	___ Research Paper
___ Business Report	___ Lab Report	___ Technical Report
___ Creative Writing	___ Outline	___ Other

Writer is at which stage of the writing process?

___ Prewriting: talking, outlining, researching, listing ideas, exploratory writing
___ Revision: limiting or adding ideas, reworking thesis, moving paragraphs or sentences, mapping paragraphs/topic sentences
___ Editing: grammar, spelling, punctuation
___ Final Draft: proofread for typos/mechanics
___ Rewrite of Graded Paper

Writer needed assistance with content (high order)

___ understanding the subject
___ determining the main idea (thesis)
___ developing ideas: examples, explanations, statistics, researched materials, expert testimony, other _____
___ finding topic sentences
___ focusing on purpose and audience: tone/vocab
___ other _____

Writer needed assistance with organization

__ example __ narrative __ descriptive __ argument
__ comparison __ analysis __ definition __ process
__ div/class __ cause/effect __ analogy __ other

___ arranging ideas in a recognized order: spatial, rank of importance, chronological, logical
___ writing an introduction
___ arranging paragraphs in an effective order
___ paragraph unity: each focused on a single idea
___ paragraph cohesiveness: all linked to the thesis
___ writing a conclusion

Writer needed assistance with style (middle order)

___ diction: effective word choice, active verbs, concrete nouns, effective use of modifiers
___ syntax: eliminating wordiness, placement of important points in a sentence, avoiding awkward expressions, eliminating clichés and biased language, editing passive voice

Writer needed assistance with editing (low order)

___ punctuation: commas, quotation marks, etc.
___ spelling errors
___ fragments, run-ons, fused sentences
___ grammar: agreement (subject/verb, pronoun/antecedent); shifts in tense, person, number, voice; misplaced modifiers; case

Writer needed assistance with format:

___ following MLA, APA, or other as assigned
___ following instructor's directions

Writing Fellow's Comments:

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